# CURIOSITATES EROTICÆ PHYSIOLOGIÆ;

# Curiositates Eroticæ Physiologiæ;

OR,

## TABOOED SUBJECTS FREELY TREATED.

IN

*SIX ESSAYS, viz.:*

1. GENERATION. 2. CHASTITY AND MODESTY. 3. MARRIAGE.
4. CIRCUMCISION. 5. EUNUCHISM.
6. HERMAPHRODISM.

AND FOLLOWED BY A CLOSING ESSAY

ON DEATH.

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"*Aphrodisiacs and Anti-Aphrodisiacs*,"
"*An Apology for Mohammed and the Koran*," *&c.*, *&c.*, *&c.*

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# PREFACE

—o—

OF all the subjects included under the term *Physiology*, there is not one so interesting, curious, and important as that *of human generation and its subsidiary branches.* A few works of the kind have, it is true, been published at long intervals, but their language has, in deference to a *pseudo* modesty, been so veiled and disguised as to render these works spiritless, jejune, and destitute of all interest, the inevitable consequence being that the wearied and impatient reader cast the volume aside in utter disappointment.

Fastidiousness such as this was despised by the ancients, who, as they regarded the reproductive powers of nature,

and, consequently, the reproductive organs and functions themselves, with the greatest awe and reverence, so they could afford to *call a spade a spade.*

Now, the moderns, on the contrary, influenced, we suppose, by *outré* and ridiculous notions of delicacy, look upon the same parts with aversion and disgust, as if they had been the work of some filthy and obscene spirit, rather than that they had been fashioned by the Almighty hand of a pure and divine Demiurgos.

An exaggerated delicacy must always be regarded as suspicious, it being found that the possession of a virtue is the less, in an inverse ratio to the boast of having it.

Thus Dean Swift remarked that the greater the squeamishness of a man's ears, the nastier were his ideas and thoughts.

Now, if this observation be true, as we believe it is, what is to be said of those would be *linguistic purists* who recommend mutilating the brave old English word *cock*, and thus metamorphose it into *co.*, on account of its indecency, a sentence which is to be extended to all the unfortunate words compounded of it, as Turncock, which must be read Turnco,

&c., &c. The absurdity of this proposed change, as well as its injustice to poor Chanticleer, the husband of Dame Partlet, is the greater, since it is well known that hens are fecundated, not by intromission but by compression.

Of a truth, M. de Voltaire was right in saying that—

"*La Pudeurs' était enfuite du cœur pour se réfugier sur les lèvres.*"

Modesty has fled from the heart to take refuge on the lips.

Let it not be supposed from these remarks that the author's intention has been that of writing an *obscene* book, or even to employ obscene words. He holds that the grand subject—the Reproduction of the Human Race—which runs more or less through all the essays in this volume, is, in itself, most pure, and that the words which are necessary, adequately, and correctly to describe it in its various phases and ramifications, have acquired the stigma of obscene only in modern times, and, though an ultra-fastidiousness, which would hesitate to apply the word *breech* to a man's small clothes, but would rather designate them as unmentionables, indescribables, or femoral habiliments.

In conclusion, the hope is expressed that the present work may not be found a collection of dry technical treatises, inasmuch as the text has been elucidated by various notes, anecdotes, and historical references incidental to and connected with the subject matter.

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# ESSAY I.

## ON GENERATION.*

Parent of Rome! by Gods and men belov'd,
Benignant Venus! the sail-clad Main
And fruitful Earth, as round the seasons roll
With life, who swellest, for by thee all live,
And living, hail thee cheerful light of day;
Thee, Goddess, at thy glad approach, the winds,
The tempests fly; Dædalian Earth to thee
Pours forth her sweetest flow'rets. Ocean laughs,
And the blue Heavens in cloudless splendour deck'd
For when the Spring first ekes her frolic eye,
And genial zephrys long lock'd up respire,
Then, Goddess! th' ærial birds confess
To rapture, through ev'ry shiv'ring plume;
Thee, the wild herds, hence o'er the joyous glebe
Bounding at large, with undaunted chest,
Stemming the torrent wide. Thro' all that lives
So, by thy charms, thy blandishments o'erpower'd
Springs the warm wish, thy footsteps to pursue,
Till through the seas, the mountains and the floods,
The verdant meads and woodlands filled with song,
Spur'd by desire, each palpitating tribe
Haste at thy shrine, to plant the future race.

GENERATION is that function of the animal economy by which the species is perpetuated. Inanimate matter and unorganized bodies are subject to no alterations, and would never change their condition did not external forces either destroy or modify them. Organized

*This beautiful invocation to Venus with which Lucretius commences his poem entitled, "De rerum naturâ," is so apposite to the subject of the present essay, as to be deemed an appropriate introduction thereto.

bodies, on the contrary, very different from these inert masses, are active *media* of new combinations and changes; they undergo alterations, and are even destroyed by the exercise of their own powers, the entire cessation of which delivers up their spoils to the grand circle of changes which organized matter is constantly undergoing. In other words, by *Generation* is to be understood that faculty which a living being possesses of producing another being similar to itself. The same word is also used to designate the act by which this reproduction is effected. This faculty is exclusively confined to organized beings whose life is more or less independent of the general laws affecting matter, to those beings, in fact, which only exist for a period of time assigned for each species, which have one kind of growth and another of decay; the term of which latter is that of their complete disorganization and their return to the condition of inorganic matter. These beings are divided into an almost innumerable multitude of distinct types.

The function of generation is performed by means of two sets of organs, each of which gives origin to a peculiar product capable of uniting with the other, so as to produce a new individual.

These two sets of organs assigned to the two different sexes are called *the male and female organs of generation.* The female organs produce a globular body called the *germ* or *egg*, which is capable of being developed in the body of a young female. The male organs produce that which is necessary to fecundate the germ, and enable it to go through its natural growth and development.

Such are the only general and universal characters of the organs of generation.

Generation is the greatest mystery presented to our view in the economy of living bodies; and its real nature is still involved in the most complete obscurity. Hitherto no observation authorizes us to admit the simultaneous formation of a living body in all its parts; that is to say, by the union of particles suddenly brought together. The comparison of generation with crystallization is supported by no just analogy; crystals are made up of homogeneous particles attracting each other indirectly, and agglutinated by their faces, which determine the order of arrangement; whereas living bodies are composed of numerous fibres or plates, heterogeneous in their composition, diversified in their configurations, and destined to particular functions, so that they can only be in one place and between other determined fibres or lamellas. Moreover, living bodies, however small they may be, possess all their parts from the first moment of their existence; they grow not by the addition of new layers, but by the, sometimes uniform, and sometimes irregular development of parts, all of which existed previously to any sensible growth. The only circumstance belonging to all kinds of generation, and, consequently, the only essential circumstance in the process, is that every living body, at the first period of its sensible existence, is attached to a larger body of the same species with itself; that it makes a part of this larger body, and is nourished by its juices for a certain length of time. Its subsequent separation constitutes its *birth*, which may be produced simply from the life of the larger body and the consequent development of the smaller, without the aid of any occasional cause. Thus, in its essence, *generation*, as far as we can understand it, is only the appearance of a small organized body *upon* or *in* some part

of another and larger one, from which it will be separated, at the expiration of a certain period, in order to assume an independent and insolated existence. All the acts or organs which co-operate in certain classes of organized bodies, are only necessary to this primary function. When the function is thus reduced to its most simple state, it constitutes the *germiparous*, or generation by shoots. Other modes of generation are accomplished in appropriate organs; the germs appear in a definite situation of the body, and the assistance of certain operations is required for their further development. These operations constitute *fecundation*, and suppose the existence of sexual parts which may either be separate or united in the same individual. The fecundated, or, if we may use the word—fecundable—sex, in which the germ is found, is the female; and the fecundating sex, whose assistance is necessary for the complete development of the germ, is the male. The office of the latter is that of furnishing the fecundating or seminal fluid; but the manner in which that contributes to the development of the germ is not yet settled by physiologists. Some, forming their opinions from the human subject and the mammalia where the germs are imperceptible before fecundation, suppose that these are created by the mixture of the male fluid with that which they believe to exist in the female, or, that they pre-exist in the male semen, and that the female only furnishes them with an abode. Some consult the analogy of other classes of animals and of plants. In several instances, particularly in the frog, the germ may be clearly recognized in the ovum or egg of the female before fecundation; its pre-existence may be inferred in other cases, from the manner in which it is organically connected to the ovum, when it is first visible; for it is agreed, on all sides, that

the ovum exists in the female before fecundation—since virgin hens lay eggs.*

From this analogy these physiologists conclude that the germ pre-exists in all females, and that the fecundating liquor is a stimulus which bestows on it an independent life, by awakening it, so to speak, from the species of lethargy in which it would, otherwise, have constantly remained.

After the above general and introductory matter, we shall now proceed to notice some of the most prominent systems or hypotheses formed or invented by ingenious and celebrated natural philosophers and physiologists for the purpose of explaining or accounting for the many extraordinary and interesting, but dark and obscure facts and circumstances with which the subject of generation is fraught.

At the further end of a canal, called by anatomists *vagina*, a Latin word signifying *sheath*, is found the matrix or womb, which is a kind of purse or bag closed at the bottom, but presenting to the vagina a small orifice which, valve-like, can open and shut itself. The bottom of this purse or bag (the matrix) is lined with a membrane, having many corrugations or wrinkles enabling it to expand itself simultaneously with the growth of the fœtus. This membrane is, moreover, perforated by numerous small holes, through which, it is probable, the liquor shed by the female, during copulation, escapes. The

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*See, on this subject, a curious work entitled—"VENUS SINE CONCUBITU. A Letter humbly addressed to the Royal Society, in which is proved by most incontestable EVIDENCE, drawn from Reason and Practice, that a Woman may conceive and be brought to Bed without any commerce with man. First printed in 1750."

ancients imagined the fœtus to be formed by the mingling together of the seminal fluids emitted by each of the two sexes respectively. The seminal liquor of the male forcibly ejaculated into the matrix, mingled itself with the seminal fluid of the female; the results of such a mixture being an animal. The whole of the operation was attributed to a *generative faculty* of power.

Such was the opinion of Aristotle, excepting only that he believed the principle of generation resident exclusively in the seminal liquor of the male, while that of the female served only to the nutrition and growth of the fœtus.*

This system held its ground for a long succession of ages, until, at length, new anatomical researches discovered about the matrix—two whitish bodies—formed of several round vesicles and filled with a liquor resembling the white of an egg. Reasoning from analogy these bodies were supposed to be performing here, the same office as the ovaries did in birds, and that the vesicles contained in them were *bona-fide* eggs. But as the ovaries were placed outside the matrix, how could the eggs, even supposing that they were detached, find their way into its cavity, in which, if the fœtus is not formed, it, at least, commences its growth? This difficulty was removed by the celebrated Fallopius, who discovered two tubes, whose extremities floating about in the belly were terminated by what may be called fringes, which, upon approaching the ovary, seized hold of it, received the egg, and carried it into the matrix.

These opinions respecting generation were, for many years,

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*Arist. *de generat : animal:* Lib. II. Cap. IV.

deemed satisfactory, until, in 1677, a young physiologist, named Hartsocker bethought him of examining by a microscope that liquor which had given rise to so many and such opposite opinions. But what a marvellous spectacle presented itself to his admiring gaze, when he discovered in it living animals! One single drop was an ocean, in which were swimming about, in a thousand different directions, an innumerable multitude of minute animalcula. He placed under the same microscope similar liquors taken from different animals, and always with the like results, excepting that the forms of these creatures were different. Search was made in the blood and in all the other liquors of the body, for something similar; but, however high the magnifying power, nothing of the kind was to be found.

This surprising and unexpected discovery effected an entire change; all the fecundity hitherto attributed to the female was now placed to the credit of the male. This little worm swimming about in the semen contains an infinity of generations from father to father, *ad infinitum*. It has its own seminal liquor, in which swim animalcules as much smaller than itself, as it is smaller than its father, and so on, without end.

Lowenhock, following up the discoveries of Hartsocker, found that these animalcules are furnished with a tail, and that, in form they resemble the frog when just spawned. Their movements, at first very rapid, gradually become less and less so, and upon their native element cooling or evaporating, they perished. Some, almost imperceptible, spots or places in the internal membrane of the matrix appear designed for the reception of the little animal as well as for providing it with the juices necessary for its growth. Should one or more of these animalcules be fortunate enough to discover one of these spots or, as it were, *oases*, they would fix themselves thereon, by means

of filaments or threads forming the *placenta*, and which, uniting the animalcule to the mother's body, furnish it with the required nourishment; as to the other animalcules that are not so fortunate as to find such snug quarters, they perish like seeds in a sterile soil.

All the above systems, each of which was, in its day, deemed so satisfctory, were now to be exploded. In the reign of Charles II., Harvey, a physician so celebrated as the discoverer of the "circulation of the blood," commenced his researches on the *quæstio vexata* of generation, and he entered upon his enquires under very favourable circumstances, as the king, with the view of affording him the greatest facilities for prosecuting his researches, placed at his disposal all the deer, male and female, in the royal parks; and whole hecatombs of these antlered denizens of the forest did Harvey sacrifice for the benefit of science. The chief result of his experiment upon these animals, as well as upon the females of rabbits, dogs, and other brutes, was his being convinced that, so far from the semen of the male remaining for any time in the matrix, it never even entered it. Harvey next discovered a number of loose threads or filaments, forming a kind of net-work or plexus, similar to a spider's web. This plexus soon took the form of a pouch or bag, containing a liquid like the white of an egg, in which floated about another spherical envelop filled with a clear and crystaline fluid, a fluid in which was to be seen a new prodigy. This was not a complete organized animal, as might have been expected from the preceding systems, but merely the *principle* or beginning of one, in fact, a *living point* (punctum saliens) before any of the other parts were formed. It was seen floating and jumping about in the crystalline fluid, and deriving its nourishment from a vein hanging loose in the

liquid in which it swam. This most extraordinary and interesting little stranger Harvey had the honour of presenting to his majesty; a very befitting introduction to one who was so notorious as was Charles the II., for the delight he took in the place which dame Nature had destined for the abode of the *spermatazoon*, or spermatic animalcule.

Such were the principal discoveries, and they certainly appear incompatible both with the egg system and that of the spermatic animalcule.

Instead of seeing the animal grow by *intus-susception* of a new matter, which would have been the case had it been formed in the egg of the female, or if it had been a little worm swimming in the semen of the male, here it is an animal formed by the juxta-position of new parts. Harvey saw, first, the bag or pouch formed which was to contain the animal; and this bag, instead of being the membrane of an egg having the power of dilation, is formed under his very eye, as a cloth is manufactured. At first, it is only a thread, or filaments, stretched or spread out from one end of the matrix to the other; these filaments increase in number, and, joining one another in every direction, form, at length, a real membrane.

It is true, Harvey says nothing about the formation of this interior sack or bag, but he saw the animal, which swam in it, assume its form. At first it is but a point, but a point which has life, and which, when all the other parts come in juxta-position with it, soon becomes an animal.

All these experiments and observations, so opposed as they were to the egg system, as well as to that of the spermatic animalcula, appeared to Harvey to destroy the system or hypothesis of the mixture of the two seminal fluids, because

neither of them was to be found in the matrix. Then it was that this eminent physiologist, despairing of being able to give a clear and satisfactory explanation of generation, was forced to have recourse to comparisons, in order to extricate himself from the difficulty; thus, he says, that the female is fecundated by the male, as iron, when touched by the loadstone, acquires the magnetic power, upon which species of impregnation he indulges in a dissertation more scholastic than physical, and finishes by comparing the fecundated matrix to the brain, the substance of which it then resembles. *The one conceives* the fœtus, *as the other conceives the ideas which are formed in it;* an explanation so strange that it must most assuredly humiliate all those who flatter themselves with being able to penetrate the secrets of nature.

Since Harvey's time, many changes and modifications of the ovary system, as well as attempts to reconcile it with that of the spermatic animalcula, have been made, to notice all of which would far exceed the limits of the present essay. Suffice it, then, to say, that, from the most recent discoveries and researches of the ablest European physiologists, it is considered as a well authenticated fact—that the mature egg is not capable, by itself, of being developed into the embryo. If simply discharged from the ovary, and carried through the oviducts towards the matrix, it soon dies, and is decomposed, like any other part of the body separated from its natural connexions. It is only when fecundated by the spermatic fluid of the male that it is stimulated to combined developement, and becomes capable of complete organization.

The product of the male generative organs consists of a colourless and somewhat viscid and albuminous fluid, containing an innumerable quantity of minute filamentous bodies, termed

*spermatazoa*, which name has been given to these bodies, on account of their exhibiting, under the microscope, a very active and continuous movement, bearing some resemblance to that of certain animalcules.

The spermatazoa of the human subject are about the $\frac{1}{600}$ part of one inch in length. The anterior extremity presents a somewhat flattened, triangular-shaped enlargement, termed "the head," which constitutes about one tenth part of the entire length of the spermatazoon, the remaining portion is a very slender filamentous prolongation termed "the tail," which tapers gradually, becoming so exceedingly delicate towards its extremity that it is difficult to be seen except when in motion. There is no further organization or any internal structure to be detected in any part of the spermatazoon, and the whole appears to consist of a completely homogeneous, tolerably firm, substance. The terms "head and tail," are not, therefore, used when describing the different parts of the spermatazoon, in the same sense as that in which they would be applied to the same corresponding part of an animal, but simply for the sake of convenience, just as we might speak of the head of an arrow, or the tail of a comet. The most remarkable peculiarity in the spermatazoa is their singular and active movement. If a drop of fresh seminal fluid be placed under the microscope the numberless minute filaments with which it is crowded seem to be in a state of incessant and agitated motion. They move about in the fluid like so many minute corpuscles lashing their tails and propelling their heads. The rate of motion is about one inch in fifteen minutes. Respecting the purpose served by these seminal filaments, or concerning their exact nature, little that is certain can be said. Their occurrence in the impregnating fluid of nearly all classes of animals proves

that they are essential to the process of impregnation; but beyond this, and that their contact with the ovum is necessary for its development was, for some time, not known.

This movement of the spermatozoa in many species of animals strongly resembles that of the tadpole.

As to the spermatic fluid, there are several conditions which are essential to the successful accomplishment of the act of fecundation.

First.—The spermatazoa must be present and in a state of active vitality.

Secondly.—The spermatazoa must come into actual contact with the egg, or its immediate envelope.

There is every reason to believe that the spermatazoon, at the time of impregnation, actually penetrates the interior of the egg, and thus comes into contact with the vitelluus.

As to the *modus operandi* employed by different animals for perpetuating their species, a certain analogy undoubtedly exists, for notwithstanding the infinite variety which prevails throughout nature, the changes are never sudden or abrupt; but our ignorance upon the subject causes us almost continually to take for proximate species those which, on the contrary, are far removed from each other.

In fact, the variety of ways in which the different species of animals perform the generative act, is truly surprising.

The impetuous bull, proud of his lustful vigour, delays not his joys by vain and tantalizing caresses, but rushes at once upon his favourite heifer, darts his organ of love into the receptacle destined to receive it, and deluges it with copious floods of the fecundating fluid.

The turtle-dove announces, by tender cooings, her amorous

desires; the acmé of delight being preceded by thousands of rapturous billings and endearments.

A long-winged insect, called the dragon-fly, pursues his female through the air, and, overtaking her, they embrace, and linked, as it were, together, heedless of what may become of them, the two lovers fly together, abandoning themselves to the capricious winds.

Another kind of animals, which for a long time were erroneously taken for gall-nuts, are very far from thus promenading their amours. The female, under this form, so little resembling that of an animal, passes the greatest portion of her life motionless and fixed against the bark of a tree. She is almost completely covered with a kind of shell, and a nearly imperceptible cleft or slit is its only door to external life. The male of this extraordinary creature bears not the slightest resemblance to her, it is a gnat, whose infidelities she can never discover, and whose caresses she patiently awaits. After the insect has introduced its male organ into the cavity or slit, the fecundity of the female is so prodiguous that it seems as if her shell and her skin were no longer any thing but a bag or pouch filled with an innumerable multitude of little ones.

The gall-nut insect is not the only kind of animal the male of which is an inhabitant of the air, while the female, destitute of wings, and whose form is altogether different, crawls upon the earth. Those diamonds which sparkle in the bushes during an autumnal evening, those glow-worms, are the females of winged insects who, most probably, would be unable to find them in the darkness of the night but for his love torch, which serves to guide them to the abode of their mistress.

Nature, kind alike to all, acts now the part of a cruel step-

mother even to animals which excite in us feelings of aversion, disgust, and horror, for the loathsome toad continues embracing his female during entire months, nor can the severing of a limb, nor even the application of fire to his body, compel him to relax his hold.

While other animals are so assiduous, so *empressés* in their amours, the timid fish is distinguished by an extreme diffidence and timidity, contenting itself with dancing attendance upon the female in their native element and deeming itself but too happy in fecundating the eggs or spawn after she has committed them to the waves.

But if fishes appear to observe so much delicacy in their loves, other animals carry theirs to the most unrestrained debauchery. The queen of the bees has a whole seraglio of lovers, and gratifies them all. In vain does she endeavour to conceal her lubricity within the walls of her palaces. A distinguished naturalist* has convinced himself, with his own eyes, of her manifold prostitutions. Her fecundity keeps pace with her intemperance, for her progeny is no less in number than between 30,000 and 40,000.

But, wonderful as is the productiveness of these insects, what is still more so is their not being restricted as other animals are, to two sexes only. The bee family is, in fact, composed of a very small number of bees, each of which is destined to become the queen of a new swarm, of about two thousand males and of a prodigious number of neuters, mere flies without any sex, whose sole occupation is that of making honey, feeding the little ones as soon as born, and in administering to the luxury

*Hist. des. Insect., par. M. de. Reamur. Tom v. p. 504.

and abundance of the hive. This is a kind of animal very different from those of which we have hitherto spoken, inasmuch as with them, two individuals formed or composed the family, and sufficed to perpetuate the species; whereas, among the bees, the family consists of only one female, while the sex of the male appears divided among thousands of individuals, while thousands more are without any sex at all. In other species, on the contrary, both sexes are united in one and the same individual. Each snail, for instance, is provided with the male as well as with the female organs of generation. Thus furnished, snails unite together, and entwining by long coils, perform the generative act, after which double copulation each snail lays its eggs.

But notwithstanding this privilege possessed by the snail of having both sexes, nature has ordained that two should be required for perpetuating the species.

A much more perfect hermaphrodite is, however, found in a small insect, very common in our gardens, and which naturalists call the *plant-louse*. This little creature produces one like itself, independently of any copulation whatsoever. This marvellous fact would be almost incredible had it not been attested by Reamur. This celebrated naturalist took a plant-louse, which had just quitted its mother's or its father's body, kept it carefully separated from all intercourse with any other one, feeding it in a glass vessel tightly corked; after which it was seen in the act of producing a great number of insects like itself. In this manner five well attested generations were obtained, without any copulation.*

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*See Philos. Transac. No. 467.

What appears, however, as a still greater marvel is that these very insects which can thus breed, independently of coition, can copulate quite as well when they take the fancy so to do.

The aquatic worm called the polyp or polypus possesses much greater and more astonishing means whereby to propagate its species. As a tree shoots forth its branches so does the polypus send forth young polyps which, as soon as they have attained a certain growth, detach themselves from the parent trunk, but these, often before so separating themselves, throw out new ones, and all these descendants of different degrees remain attached to their ancestor.

Reamur found, with the greatest certainty, that this increase of family was effected without any kind of copulation whatever. But this will cease to astonish, when it is placed beyond the possibility of a doubt, that an animal exists which for the purpose of propagating its species only requires to be divided or cut into several parts; the portions so cut off, and to which the head adheres, produces a tail, while that to which the tail adheres produces a head, and those portions which are deprived of both, when again severed, produce both.

The real hydra, much more wonderful than the fabulous one, when split into two parts throughout its entire length, and then mutilated in every possible way, is soon repaired, each independent portion becoming a new animal.*

With respect to the important question which posture is the best for coition, whether the object be that of begetting children, or that of mere animal gratification, the opinions of

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*See Philos. Transac. No. 467.

medical men and of physiologists are divided. Nature herself, however, has taught both sexes those postures which are allowable because contributing to generation, while experience and observation have indicated those which are prejudicial to it, and on that account, forbidden.

All the postures, to the number of twelve, invented by the Greek courtezan Cyrene, as being the best in which to perform the act of Love: all those which Phyleiris and Ashyanassee published, which Elephaseus composed in Leonine verse, and which afterwards the Roman Emperor Nero caused to be painted on the walls of his banqueting room by the first artists of Rome, all these prove that women are far better adepts in the *ars amandi* and its mysteries than men; that they have a much keener relish for the tender bliss, to which they deliver themselves up with a zest and an *abandon* unknown to men; in short, that at the feast of Love, women are *gourmandes par excellence.*

Our sexual parts clearly indicate that they were not intended to be used in a standing posture like that of the hedgehog. We must certainly injure our health by adopting it, and not only that, but we thereby render generation difficult. The whole nervous system suffers; the eyes become dim; the brain is confused; the spine is affected; the knees tremble; and the legs seem as if unable to sustain the superincumbent weight of the body.

To an habitual indulgence in this posture may, in a great measure, be attributed debility, lassitude, gout, and rheumatism, and, what is still worse, the process of generation is impeded by it, inasmuch as the seminal fluid of the male never reaches, in a sufficient quantity, the receptacle provided for it by nature.

The sitting posture is equally objectionable, not only in consequence of the sexual parts of the male and the female never coming into complete contact with each other, but also because the quantity of the semen of the male which reaches the matrix is insufficient for the production of a strong and well formed infant.

The best posture of all is that which is most generally adopted—lips to lips, forming what Shakespeare styles, somewhat irreverently, "*the beast with two backs.*"*

But to enjoy a woman, *par dèrriere*, as the French say, or more exactly, *en levrette* (*a* greyhound bitch), may be reckoned as unnatural, and, therefore, to be condemned. Many distinguished physiologists and medical practitioners now however assert the contrary, seeing that it is a form of copulation which nature has taught the greater number of animals to practice. In fact, anatomy shews us that the matrix is much better situated for conception when a woman is resting on her hands and on her feet than when lying on her back. The farther extremity of that part is then much lower than its orifice, and nothing more is required than to discharge the semen into it, for it will then be carried down, by its own weight, to where it is required for the process of generation. This posture is the most natural but the least

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*Brabantio (Desdemona's father): What profane wretch art thou?

Iago: I am come to tell you, sir, that your daughter and the Moor (Othello) *are making the beast with two backs.*

This is a translation of an old French proverbial expression for *faire l'amour avec une femme*, to enjoy a woman. It is frequently used by Rabelais. See *Le Dictionnaire Comique* of Le Roux. Latest edition, in two volumes small 8vo. Printed at Pampeluna in 1820.

voluptuous one, and yet it was the one in which Catherine II. of Russia,* the modern Messalina, and who, in her day, was esteemed *la più famosa futatrice nel mondo*, very frequently indulged, Prince Potemkin and Count Orloff being the chief favourites; but, perhaps, the desire of getting an heir might be a reason for her choosing this posture.

St. Thomas, who is reputed one of the ablest theologians and casuists, is of the same opinion, for he says that it is lawful for a married couple to adopt this posture (*par derriére*) provided it be not for indulging in unbridled lust, but only when the case is a legitimate one, such as when the man's belly is too large or fat, or when he fears stifling the infant just about to be born, but still in its mother's womb.†

Seneca has remarked that man is never so great a boaster as in love matters, or when, for the purpose of being admired, he brags of exploits which he has never achieved. Most men appear as heroes when *speaking* of love, but show the white feather when *called up to the scratch.* It is not enough to kiss and toy with a woman, much more is required to prove his manhood, and that he is able to beget one of his own kind.

There have been men of so hot a temperament as to have enjoyed several women, many nights in succession, but the result has been that of having weakened themselves to such a degree that their semen lost all its fecundating

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*See the private Life of the Empress Catherine II. of Russia, written in Italian by Egidio Ravetti, formerly Italian Secretary to Prince Potemkin, and published at Venice in 1793.

†Monuerim aliquando conversionem debiti situs omnino culpâ *vacare*, quum non captandæ volumtatis gratiâ, sed aliqua justa causa intercedit, scilicet ob pinguetudinem viri, suffocandi que fœturn metum, 4 *d* 32, *in expos:*

virtue, and that their sexual parts refused to obey their orders. The Emperor Nero, according to Petronius Arbiter, was not the only one who wanted vigour and courage when locked in the arms of the lovely Poppea. It must, however, be remarked that such accounts as those given by Crucius and Clements, of Alexandria, of whom the former relates as a fact that a serving man got ten servant girls with child in one night, and the latter, who tells us that Hercules, during twelve or fourteen hours that he lay with fifty Athenian girls, got them all with child, so that at the end of nine months, each gave birth to a bouncing boy. But such accounts as these are, evidently, mere fables. In fact after the fifth or sixth round of an amorous conflict, nothing more is discharged but a crude aqueous humour, and sometimes blood, instead of a rich and natural semen.

Hence it appears that the number of times a man can enjoy a woman in one and the same night, rarely exceeds four or five. This must, however, be taken as a general rule, for an authentic account of a decree made by a king of Arragon upon this matter is still extant. A woman, who was married to a Catalan or Catalonian, cast herself one day at the king's feet, and implored his aid to prevent the too frequent caresses of her husband, which, if persisted in, would most certainly cause her death. The Catalan being sent for, frankly confessed to *kissing* his wife ten times during every night. Upon hearing which, the king forbade him, under pain of death, to perform the matrimonial duty more than *six* times nightly, a prescription which eventually saved the poor woman from a galloping consumption.

A most remarkable instance of the generative power at a very advanced age was exhibited in the person of the celebrated

Thomas Parr, a poor countryman, born at Winnington, in the county of Salop, in the year 1483, and died at London on the 14th November, 1635, after living one hundred and fifty-two years and nine months, and having survived nine princes. This Patriarch, as he may be called, was brought up to London by the Earl of Arundel, on whose estate he lived, in order to be exhibited to Charles II. as a prodigy of Nature, and upon Parr's death the King commanded a celebrated physician and anatomist to make a *post mortem* examination of the body, whose report was as follows:

"The body was muscular; the chest was hairy, and the hair on the fore-arms still black; the legs, however, were without hair, and smooth; the organs of generation were healthy; the penis neither retracted nor extenuated, nor the scrotum filled with any serous infiltration, as happens so commonly among the decrepid."*

So that it seemed not improbable that the common report was true, viz:—That he did public penance under a conviction for incontinence after he had passed his one hundredth year, and his wife, whom he had married as a widow in his own hundred and twentieth year, did not deny that he had intercourse with her after the manner of other husbands with their wives, nor until about twelve years back had he ceased to embrace her frequently.

The Rabbis, so deeply interested in the preservation of *God's chosen people*, enacted a kind of *sumptuary law* to prevent the waste of semen. Thus a peasant was restricted to enjoying his wife to *once* a week; a tradesman or carrier to once a month;

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* See Life of Dr. Harvey, by Rob. Wilks, M. D.

a sailor to twice a year; a man of letters to once in two years. It is pretty evident that the ladies had no finger in this pie, for, if such had been the case, the allotment would certainly have been much more liberal.

The amorous desires of women are not under such control as those of our sex, otherwise there would have been no necessity for the Lithuanian noble of gone-by days, to have employed a coadjutor. The truth is, women very rarely feel exhausted by this amorous sport, even when they have suffered for a long time the amorous assaults of many men in succession. Witness the libidinous Messalina, and the lecherous Cleopatra. The former, having taken the name of Lysisca, a noted Roman prostitute, when she frequented the brothels of the eternal city for the purpose of indulging her lust, surpassed, by twenty-five *ictus*, in less than twenty hours, the above named celebrated courtezan.

Ausa Palatino tegetem præ ferre cubili
Sumere nocturnos meretrix Augusta cucullos
Linquebat comite ancillâ non amplius unâ
Et nigrum flavo crinem abscondente galero
Intravit calidum veteri centone lupanar
Et cellam vacuam atque suam; tunc nuda papillis
Constitit auratis, titulum, mentita et Lyciscæ.*

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* The august harlot daring to prefer a coarse rug to the
Bed of state to take noctural hoods,
Attended by not more than one maid servant,
And a yellow peruke hiding her black hair,
She entered the brothel, warm with an old patched quilt,
And the empty cell which was hers; then she stood naked,
With her breasts adorned with gold,
Shamming the name of Lysisca.—Juvenal Satire vi.

While Cleopatra, if we can credit the letter of Marc Anthony, one of her lovers, sustained the amorous efforts, during one night, of one hundred and six men, without evincing the slightest fatigue.*

We shall conclude this, our essay, by a *very domestic* anecdote in *ipsissimis verbis* of the party who played first fiddle in the matrimonial duet, and who was no less a person than Tristram Shandy, gent.

"I wish my father, or my mother, or, indeed, both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to do, had minded what they were about when they begot me; had they duly considered how much depended upon what they were then doing, that not only the production of a rational being was concerned in it, but that, possibly, the happy formation and temperament of his body, perhaps his genius and the very cast of his mind; . . . . . I am verily persuaded I should have made quite a different figure in the world from that in which the reader is likely to see me. . . . . I believe my father, who was the most regular of men in all that he did, had made it a rule, for many years, to wind up a large house clock which was standing on the backstairs head with his own hand, and being somewhat between fifty and sixty years of age at the time I have been speaking of, he had, likewise, brought some other little family concerns to the same period, in order, as he would often say to my uncle Toby, to get them

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* In some very warm climates the desires of the women are so imperious and exacting that the men are obliged to wear girdles to protect them from the amorous assaults of the other sex. (See *Traite sur les Climats.* Tom. ii, p. 37.)

all out of the way at one time, and be no more plagued and pestered with them the rest of the month. . . . .

"'*Pray, my dear,*" quoth my mother, '*have you not forgot to wind up the clock?*'

"'Good God!' cried my father, making an exclamation, but taking care to moderate his voice at the same time; '*Did ever woman, since the creation of the world, interrupt a man with such a silly question?*'

"'Pray, what was your father doing?'

"'*NOTHING!*'"

## ESSAY II.

## ON VIRGINITY AND CHASTITY.

NUMEROUS authors* attest the high value which the eastern nations, in general, attached to virginity; but by no people was it held in greater esteem than by the Jews, as may be inferred from the laws enacted by Moses respecting it, and which will be found in Deuteronomy as follows:†

"If any man take a wife, and go in unto her, and hate her, and give occasion of speech against her, and bring up an evil upon her, and say, 'I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid:' "

"Then shall the father of the damsel and her mother take

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* Prosper, Alpin, Egypt, Beloe's Observations, Perry's Travels, Chardin, Tavernier, Thevenot, Le Muire Voyages, Leon Afric, Savary, Niepbur, Volney, Sonnerat, &c.

† Deuteronomy, xxii, 13-21.

and bring forth the tokens of the girl's virginity unto the elders of the city in the gate:"

"And the damsel's father shall say unto the elders, 'I gave my daughter unto this man for wife, and he hateth her; and lo! he hath given occasion of speech against her, saying, I found not thy daughter a maid, and yet these are the *tokens* of my daughter's virginity'—and they shall spread the cloth before the elders of the city:"

And the elders of the city shall take that man and chastise him:"

"And they shall amerce him in one hundred shekels of silver, and give them unto the father of the damsel, because he hath brought up an evil name upon a virgin of Israel; and she shall be his wife, he may not put her away all his days."

But if this thing be true and the *tokens* of virginity be not found for the damsel"

"Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of the city shall stone her with stones, because she hath wrought folly in Israel to play the whore in her father's house. So shalt thou put evil away from among you."

The reverence which the ancient Romans had for virginity and, consequently, for virgins themselves, is well known. The highest citizens of the state gave way to them in the street; they never went abroad without being veiled, and never showed themselves to strangers in the house of their parents. These latter scrupulously abstained from indulging in mutual endearments in their presence, and it is even asserted that a law expressly forbade a virgin's being punished with death. Hence, no doubt, originated the story of Sejanus's daughter, a girl only

eight years of age, having been violated by the executioner previously to his strangling her.

"The Lombards," says Gibbon, "allowed the *morgingcap* immediately after the wedding night; and this famous gift, the reward of virginity, might equal the fourth part of her husband's substance. Some cautious maidens, indeed, were wise enough to stipulate, beforehand, for a present which they were not too sure of deserving."*

Chastity was held in no less repute, the act of generation being, for the most part, associated with the idea of a brutish and purely animal function which appears to degrade our nature and lower us to the level of the brutes. In fact, ancient and modern religions have, with few exceptions, exacted the sacrifice of corporeal pleasures from their votaries, and, more especially, imposed upon their mistresses the vow of chastity, and the obligation of immolating at the altar the most endearing affections of our nature. This effort of continence and virtue, which manifests the empire of the mind over the body, is always admired by man, because it seems to announce a superior nature and a sublimity of character which approaches him, in some degree, to the Divinity.

Chastity, by preserving the vigour of the vital powers, and by returning into all the organs that superabundance of life which is concentrated in the genital parts, must, necessarily, increase the energy of all our functions. This physiological fact was known to the ancients,† who represented the Muses as

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* Decline and Fall, chap. xxxi. (note).

† The ancient poets bear testimony, in their verses, to the esteem in which

virgins to show the little disposition which the learned and the intellectual have for physical love, because they have too acute a sensibility. Thus La Fontaine was quite right in saying—

"Un muletier à ce jeu vaut trois rois."

With literary persons, indeed, the encephalon frequently absorbs all the activity at the genital organs, which are often prematurely emaciated and withered.

From what has been advanced, it will be easily understood that in proportion as the morals of a nation become more depraved, the fewer it produces of celebrated characters.

Corporeal strength follows the same law as mental vigour; thus the athletes lived in celibacy in order to preserve their strength; and Moses interdicted the Jews from having connubial intercourse when they were summoned to arms. Whether this esteem in which virginity is held results from its effects upon the human body, or whether it emanates from religious opinions even in climates where the propagation of the species is a religious injunction, it is found throughout the civilized world.

Among savage nations, such as the negroes, the native Americans, and the South Sea Islanders, who possess no other religious system than Fetichism, virginity is not much, if at all, esteemed. Lapeyrère asserts that the Icelanders compel their daughters to prostitute themselves to strangers. The northern Mongol tribes are reported by Steller to offer their wives to

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virginity was generally held; thus Ovid tells us that Daphne changed into a laural tree, cannot endure the action of fire without complaining, as in ancient times, she could not bear the flames of impudicity.

their guests, and the following is an amusing instance of this *liberality* among the South Sea Islanders:—

When the missionary ship "Duff" reached Christiana, or Ohittahoo, where Harris and Crook were to be left, the first visitors who came off to them were seven beautiful young women, who swam to the ship, perfectly naked, except that a few green leaves were fastened round their waists, and no sooner had they got on board, than the hungry goats attacked ravenously their Eve aprons. Harris's eyes and delicacy had to undergo further shocks in the islands. Tenae, the king, invited them to go with him to another valley; Crook readily agreed, but Harris would not go, and the chief, to accommodate him in the most obliging manner he could, left him his wife, to be treated by him as if she were his own, till he came back. It was in vain that poor missionary Harris protested that he did not want the woman. She was left to him, and finding herself neglected, called some of her female friends to satisfy themselves concerning his sex, while he was asleep. This inquest was not made without awakening him. His fear at being so awakened, and his horror at the thought of remaining among a people so given to wickedness, completely overcame him, and he quitted the island, leaving brother Crook only to the labour of love.*

The abuse of the venereal act, and the too great loss of the seminal fluid, soon produces upon men effects very analogous with those of castration, such as weakness, dejection of

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* See Wilson's Voyage and Quarterly Review, No. 3; also Ulloa, Tom. I. 343; Lignat, Voyage, Tom. III.; Lapeyrère, Voyage, p. 176; Lettres sur l'Island, &c., &c.

mind, debility, and pusillanimity, together with all that mental timidity which exaggerates the least dangers and succumbs under the most trivial apprehensions. On the contrary, men most celebrated for their moral and intellectual faculties, and who have rendered themselves illustrious by their talents or their virtues, have, for the most part, been but little given to sexual delight; and some, indeed, such as Julian, the Apostate, Newton, Kent, and William Pitt, have abstained from venery altogether.

Alegcombe gives some remarkable instances of chastity among the Jesuits. He says that Father Gill, who died in 1622, at the age of seventy-three, did not know any woman by sight, so careful was he that his senses should not dwell upon these objects—he was afraid of himself—it strûck him almost with horror to touch his own flesh, and he thanked God, who had made him short-sighted, because that defect supplied him with a powerful guard against carnal concupiscence.

Father Casteras declared that his chastity was never overcome by any irregular emotions arising from the least unrestrained imagination.

Father Coton, who had been confessor to a very licentious prince, died a virgin, and so strictly preserved his internal purity, that whatever shocked his virtue, inspired him with horror.

Father Spiza, who died in the year 1594, passed for a virgin; he never looked upon a woman; he could not distinguish his two nieces, one from the other, though he was their confessor, and he would not go into the house where they lived, on any account, when he knew they were alone.

Father Poissevin's chastity went as far as possible, for, Menage says, that, as he was going to read Tibullus, for the

sake of his elegant Latin, he fell down on his knees and prayed God that the amorous ideas of that poet might not inspire him with love.

Louis VIII., of France, in the midst of his conquests, was seized with a disorder for which his physicians could prescribe no other remedy than that of breaking the seventh commandment, his Queen being then of necessity, at Paris, as Regent during his absence. It is imagined that his bigotry would not allow him to have recourse to this prescription, for, when he was asleep, his courtiers introduced into his bed a lady of exquisite beauty, who on his awakening, confessed for what object she was there "No, my child," said the king "I had rather die, than commit a deadly sin. And then ordering the girl to be married off, made his will, and died.

What a contrast is the conduct of this king to that of "the monarch after God's own heart!"

"And it came to pass, in an evening tide, that David arose from off his bed, and walked upon the roof of the king's house, and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself; and the woman was very beautiful to look upon.

"And David sent and enquired after the woman, and one said—

" 'Is not this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah, the Hittite?'

"And when David had called him (Uriah), he did eat and drink before him, and he made him drunk; and, at even, he went out to be on his bed, with the servants of his Lord, but went not down to his house.

"And it came to pass in the morning, that David wrote a letter to Joab, and sent it by the hand of Uriah.

"And he wrote in the letter, saying, 'Set ye, Uriah, in the

forefront of the hottest battle, and retire ye from him, that he may be smitten, and die.'

"And it came to pass, that when Joab observed the city, that he assigned Uriah unto a place where he knew that valiant men were.

"And the men of the city went out, and fought with Joab: and there fell some of the people of the servants of David; and Uriah the Hittite died also."*

Malcolm IV., King of Scotland, who died in 1166, was not only devout, but had made a vow of chastity, which all the raillery and schemes of temptation contrived by his mother Ada could not induce him to break.

Luther, according to his own account, led the most spotless life during all the time of his celibacy, and till he was forty-five years of age.

Gulielmus Nubrigiensis relates that the physicians of Thomas the Second, Archbishop of York, having prescribed for him, in his last illness, the use of a woman as the only effectual remedy, the worthy prelate, to oblige his friends, pretended to comply, but did not, and died.

Among innumerable instances of the exercise of this virtue among women, the following are too remarkable not to be noticed.

Queen Zenobia's† chastity was so great that she never availed herself of those liberties which the wedded state allows, except for the procreation of children.

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* Samuel II., chap. xi., ver. 2-17.

† A Queen of Palmyra, who was conquered and taken prisoner by the Roman Emperor Aurelian, A. D. 272.

Francisca Frances, a devout lady, who was canonized in 1608, ate nothing but herbs and pulse, and drank nothing but water; and, in addition to other severities which she exercised upon herself, used to check the solicitations of the flesh by dropping scalding bacon upon her *pudenda*; a fact which is recorded in the Bull of Canonization.*

Maria† Coronel, wife of Juan de la Cerda, not being able to bear the absence of her husband, preferred committing suicide to yielding to the temptations of the flesh.

The abbey church of Chester was founded about the year 660 by Welpherus, king of the Mercians, as a nunnery, in favour of his daughter's indisposition to married life. This was the celebrated Saint Werburgh, who took the veil after living *immaculate* with her husband Ceolzedus, imitating the example of her aunt, the great Ethelreda, who cohabited for three years, with no less purity, with her spouse Tomberctus, and for twelve years with her second husband, the pious Prince Egfrid.‡

Isabella Gonzaga, the wife of the Duke of Urbino, passed two years with her husband, still remaining a virgin; and so great was her ignorance of the matrimonial duty, that she imagined all married women lived in the like manner. "At length, however," says her historian, "the mist before her eyes vanished away; whether it was that age taught her, or the free conversation she had, as a married woman, with the ladies, her

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* Tellement. Histoire des Empires.

† *Mariana.* Historia della España.

‡ Pennant. Coste. Eloge des Dames Illustres.

friends, who were also in the connubial state, enlightened her."

In proportion, as the heat of the climate augments the depravity of the morals, religious and civil institutions unite to curb the violence of the passions and keep them in check. The civil law of Asia exacts the proofs of virginity in marriages. The Jews, Egyptians, Persians, Turks, and Tartars, require, as an essential condition of the conjugal union, some proof of defloration, such as the effusion of a few drops of blood. It is the custom in the East, on the day after the consummation of the marriage, to produce the bride's linen, as an infallible token of her virginity. This custom still exists in some parts of Spain, where it was introduced by the Moors; in some of the German states, and especially in Russia.

Now notwithstanding that so great a physiologist as Hatter has countenanced this predjudice by his dictum—"The bridal bed, however, should be an ensanguined one"*—it may be confidently asserted that nothing is less to be depended upon than such a reputed proof of defloration. The relaxed state of the parts of generation from a great quantity of mucus in a woman subject to the *whites*, or from the blood of the menstrual discharge, may make the hymen yield and not rupture, so that a woman might seem a virgin, without being such; while, on the other hand, the chastest and most moral of her sex might have her hymen destroyed by preceding illness, and thus be incapacitated from giving the husband of her choice the proof of her purity. It should also be remembered that there are persons, in whom

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* Prima Venus, attamen, cruenta esse debet. Elem. Physiol. lib. xxviii., et 26, § 27.

the hymen is so indistinct, that several anatomists have doubted its existence altogether. With what eloquence does Buffon, who shared this incredulity, inveigh against the absurd importance attached to this membrane by us lords of creation—

"Les hommes des primautés en tout genre ont toujours fait grand cas de tout ce qu'ils ont cru pouvior posséder exclusivement et les premiers; c'est cette espèce de folie qui a fait un être réel de la virginité des filles. La virginité qu'est un être moral qui ne consiste que dans la pureté du cœur est devenu un objet physique dont tous les hommes se sont occupés. Ils ont établi sur cela des opinions, des usages, des cérémonies, des superstitions, et mêmes des jugemens et des peines les plus illicites, les coutumes les plus déshonnêtes ont été autorisées ou soumises à l'examen des matrones ignorantes, et exposées aux yeux de médecins prevenus les parties les plus secrétes de la nature sans songer qu'une pareille indécence est un attentât contre la virignité, que c'est la violer que de chercher de la reconnaître, que tout situation honteuse, tout état indécent dont une fille est obligée de rougir intérieurement est une vraie défloration."

It has been thought by some that the signs of defloration are not exclusively confined to the sexual parts: thus it was a popular belief at Rome, that the volume of the bosom increased after defloration, for which reason that part was very accurately measured before the consummation of marriage, and if, the day after that event, the measure was found to be too short, the delight of the husband was indescribable; the fact of virginity being, from this circumstance, deemed incontestable. It is to this usage, doubtless, that Catullus alludes in the following verses:—

Non illam nutrix oriente luce revisens
Hesterno collum poteret circumdare filo.

Severin Pineau also considered it as an indubitable proof of virginity if the length of a thread extending from the tip of the nose to the junction of the sagittal and lamloidal suture sufficed to go round the neck, an opinion in which he is followed by many respectable writers.

Mr. Mawman records a singular mode of testing chastity: "In ancient times, there was a narrow hole in a close-vaulted room, under ground, called *Winifred's needle* (at Ripon, in Yorkshire), in which female chastity was tried. The conceit was, that those women only were chaste who could pass through the needle."

The virginity of the body supposed that of the soul among the greater part of the ancients; thus we find that the primitiæ of young girls were consecrated to the gods.

Strabo informs us that the Armenians immolated their virginity to the God Amiatis; and, according to St. Augustine, the Romans dedicated a temple to Priapus, where virgins were compelled to sacrifice their virginity. But of all opinions, the most extraordinary is that which prevails at Madagas, in various parts of Africa, in Upper Asia, and even among some of the savages of Peru. In these countries so little value is set upon virginity, and upon the virginity of the membrane called *the hymen*, that the culling of this first flower is considered as a servile trouble; that girls who have already lost it are preferred as being more accomplished. At Goa, the primitæ of virgins were offered up to the idol of the Lingam or Phallus, or

to its priests; and the people believed that a woman betrayed her want of merit by remaining a virgin.

Virginity having only an imaginary, or rather, conventional value, which becomes greater in proportion to the rarity of it, the inhabitants of warm climates, where women are so complying, have sought for every means by which to secure the chastity of their females. They shut them up in their harems, and even provide them with girdles which forbid all approach to enjoyment.*

If chastity be a virtue, its abuse may occasion serious inconveniences, especially when a warm temperament demands compliance with the dictates of nature.†

"Women who cohabit with men are more healthy, those who do not are less so."

And this aphorism is so true, that women devoted to celibacy, either from religion or choice, are exposed to attacks of cancer, either in the breast or in the womb. Such was the case with the Vestals of Rome and the Virgins of the Sun in the temple of Cusco ; and such it is, in the present day, with those pious females in Catholic countries, who devote themselves to the service of religion.

Amongst the Babylonians, the Egyptians, Arabians, Greeks, and Romans, all intercourse even with their wives was forbidden on the eve of the sacrifices; and it was an established opinion among the Jews that nothing was more calculated to deprive

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* *Vide* Aphrodiasics and Anti-Aphrodiasics.

† Mulières si cum virus cœunt, magis sanæ sunt, si non, minus. Hippocrates de Generat.

the party of the gift of prophecy than sexual indulgence. It is principally among single women that various maladies of the breast and womb abound; more of them die between the ages of forty and fifty years than any other, and their life is shorter than that of married persons, for celibacy is generally less favourable to longevity than marriage.

That celibacy is in opposition to the laws of nature, and to the desire which all creatures manifest of reproducing themselves, is clear from the state of nullity to which it condemns each separate sex. The inferior animals never subject themselves to this abstinence from the functions to which nature has attached the most powerful charms; and if among the human species some individuals are found who make a merit and even a duty of it, it is because they are urged to it by motives, either of policy or religion, unless, indeed, this sacrifice be the result of a vicious conformation of the generative organs.

The effect of celibacy and chastity is to throw back upon the animal economy, a superabundance of vigour, which stimulates the nervous sytsem, and gives an inflammatory appearance to the complexion. Hence monks were obliged to be frequently bled, not only because the want of exercise, in spite of fasting and abstinence, amassed an excess of blood, but, also, in order that, by this means, the erotic passion might be diminished.

The most cruel nervous disorders, such as the *furor uterinus*, hysteria, spasms, &c., chiefly attack such as have, throughout life, refused the pleasures of love. Many fatal affections, such as mania, epilepsy, &c., prey upon those who have imposed upon themselves too severe a continence. But the dangers resulting from the abuse of this pleasure are much more formidable. Besides, nature knows how to rid herself of too abundant a

seminal fluid by the illusion of dreams in both sexes, an evacuation which is entirely confined to the human species; whether it depends upon the activity of our imagination, or arises from the abundance of food, and from a more acute sensibility than is found in other living beings.

Ere we quit the subject of virginity as regards women, we cannot refrain from saying a few words about the "Virgin Mary of the Romanists."

In Roman Catholic countries the Virgin is still addressed by her devotees under the following titles:—

"Empress of Heaven! Queen of Heaven! Empress of Angels! Queen of Angels! Empress of the Earth! Queen of the Earth! Lady of the Universe! Lady of the Earth! Patroness of Men! Advocate for Sinners! Mediatrix! Gate of Paradise! Mother of Mercies! Goddess and THE ONLY HOPE OF SINNERS!—under which two latter they profanely implore her to afford them salvation by the power which, as a mother, she is inferred to possess of *commanding* HER SON!"

The following questions and answers are extracted from a Catechism for the churches in France, page 171:—

"*Q.* Why does the Church render a particular honour to the most Holy Virgin?

"*A.* Because the most Holy Virgin surpasses all others in Holiness, and because she has an incommunicable title.

"*Q.* What is that title?

"*A.* Mother of God.

"*Q.* What does the Church more particularly honour in the most Holy Virgin?

"*A.* Her immaculate conception, her holy nativity, her divine maternity, the perfect obedience and profound humility

which she manifested on the day of the Purification and the presenting of Jesus in the temple, and, lastly, her glorious assembly."

The impropriety of this title (Mother of God) is exceedingly great. How would the compilers of the Catechism be pleased if any one were to call Anna, whose daughter Mary was, *the Grandmother of God?* The impudence of foisting these titles upon her is the greater because there is not a passage in the writings of the Evangelists, (all of whom must have known Mary), to show that, when living, she was the object even of reverence, by the command of Christ. No divine honours were paid to her by the Disciples or Apostles, none were paid to her in the first three centuries of the Christian Church, nor was it till the general Synod, held at Ephesus in the year 431 (when she was declared to be the Mother of God), that she was deemed an object of invocation. Another appellation given to her, that of *Virgo et semper Virgo*, cannot but be considered as an absurd and ludicrous compliment, when we see it recorded by Matthew (chap. i. v. 25) that Joseph knew not Mary *until* she had brought forth her first-born son; a declaration which clearly implies that the same delicacy was not observed after that event. And when we see it stated by Mark (chap. vi. v. 3), and by Luke (chap. viii. v. 19), that Jesus had brothers and sisters.

It is a singular fact that the Romish Church had no idea of the immaculate conception till the compliment had been paid her in the Koran, which was completed in the seventh century. It was, however, condemned by St. Bernard, the Oracle of Europe in his day, as a presumptuous novelty.

This species of conception being of a nature beyond all

human comprehension, whetted the prurient curiosity of the audacious, and gave rise to the most profane opinions. Take, for instance, that of St. Ambrose:

"Non emin coitus vulvæ virginalis secreta reseravit, sed immaculatum semen inviolabile utero Spiritus infudit."

For the male organ penetrated not the recesses of the virgin vagina, but the Holy Ghost poured the immaculate semen into the inviolable womb.

St. Austin, with less obscenity, but greater absurdity, says that

"God spake by his angel, and the Virgin was impregnated by the ear. *Deus loquebatur per Angelum et Virgo per aurem pregnabatur.*"

We have no laws affecting celibacy: the bachelor enjoying equally with the married man all the rights and privileges of citizenship, which is a manifest injustice, for the husband and the father render to the State, services which the man, disengaged from conjugal ties, cannot afford.

On the contrary, the bachelor, stimulated by the natural sexual wants, is obliged, in order to satisfy them, to trample upon the moral law, when he does not go the length of violating the connubial bond. For him, in fact, there are no other resources than fornication or adultery; and if society is constantly disturbed by the evils resulting from the frequent indulgence in those immoralities, bachelors are certainly most in fault. Thus, in all ages, and in all states, bachelors have been considered as the natural enemies of society.

"It is not," said Augustus, addressing them in a memorable speech, "it is not the love of a single life which captivates you when you do not marry; if you deny yourselves a companion for your table, and a partner for your bed, it is that you may,

without restraint, abandon yourself to lasciviousness and debauchery."

Augustus was in the right. The bachelor, whom no attachment fixes in his fickle desires, is often obliged to wait in order to satisfy them, and when he does obtain the present object of his passion, he abandons himself, without restraint, to the pleasure of the moment, uncertain, as he is, of again meeting, for a long time, with so favourable an opportunity: so that, with him, there is a constant alternation of irritation and exhaustion.

If he is worn out by preceding enjoyments, and chance presents him with new ones, he is compelled to be libidinous, and to employ all the means likely to insure an instantaneous vigour. On the contrary, if he is not provided with a *liaison*, his irritated organs will make him little nice in the choice of his fair one. He will, then, address himself to *Venus Vaga*, or, in other words, he will imbibe in the obscene and disgusting brothel the most fatal poison which ever issued from Pandora's box, and will disseminate it in society by communicating it to the victims whom he has seduced from innocence or from their conjugal fidelity.

There is not the least doubt that concubinage is adverse to the progress of the species, since it seeks after pleasure, but avoids the expense it involves. Considering, therefore, the bachelor as a perfect egotist, legislators of every age and country have decreed penalties against this opposition to the laws of society.

With respect to the comparative longevity of single and married persons, the former would soon renounce the state of single blessedness, and contract marriage, did they consult the bills of mortality. Buffon and De Parcieux were the first to

show that single men live a much shorter time than married ones. According to Hoffland and Sinclair, almost all individuals who have arrived at a very advanced age were married; and married women, even notwithstanding the dangers of childbirth, generally live a longer time than single ones.

Fodéré, who had accumulated a vast number of facts from an extensive medical practice, refers the comparative longevity of married persons to four circumstances:

I.—To the assistance and consolations afforded to each other by married persons; in the attentions they mutually bestow and receive during illness, the commencements of which are usually neglected by those who live by themselves.

II.—In the greater degree of activity which a person is found to observe when forced to maintain a family; now labour and exercise are as necessary for the preservation of health as food, for they undoubtedly keep off disease, and prevent us from attaching to slight indisposition that importance which is so done by those whose care is wholly confined to themselves.

III.—In the security from those diseases which are, almost always, the hand maids of the Venus Vaga, and which are not avoided even by those who confine their attachment to one person, for, in fact, if a woman is sufficiently debased to sacrifice her honour to one, there is scarcely any doubt of her allowing others to partake of her favours, a fact borne out by experience.

IV. and lastly.—The economy of the prolific fluid which is necessarily observed when both convenience and habit cause the desires to be rarely provoked. Bachelors, on the contrary, always led astray by new objects, impatient for enjoyment, oftentimes forcing nature, one sex having no reason for sparing

the other, have their sensitive and motive systems shaken by the frequent repetition of venereal delights; or else, men and women, who, from a regard to public opinion, live in apparent chastity, give themselves up to solitary indulgences, and, in those habits which are much more exhausting than the sexual union, contract severe maladies, the cause of which is most commonly kept secret from their medical adviser.

"The pleasures of love," says Galen, and after him Sanctorius and Cowper, "when they are moderate, and not indulged in until the body has had time to repair, in both sexes, but more especially in the male, the generative faculty, are salutary for the physical organization; they promote gaiety, contentment, and a sense of freedom in the female. But, as in the man, the secretion of the prolific juice is only made very slowly, as it appears to be the very quintessence of life, and to be destined, not only to fecundation, but also to being absorbed into the system for recruiting the strength of the individual; and as it is necessary that a certain quantity of it should be accumulated in the vessels, in order to procure the natural stimulus and the exhilarating emissions, it follows that too frequent enjoyments on the part of the male enervates the body and causes premature old age, and this the more rapidly, in proportion, as endeavours are made to renew them, in spite of the dictates of nature and the injunctions of morality and religion."

In conclusion it may be observed that chastity is a virtue which constitutes the essential portion of the education of females, it being for them what strength is for man. In the present day, when civilization is constantly enlarging the sphere of woman's activity and liberty, the number of her relations with our sex almost infinitely increased, and the dangers to which she is exposed are, in consequence, proportionately

multiplied, dangers against which her only safeguard is—*Chastity*.

Chastity is often confounded with continence, but there is this difference between them: that while the latter is understood as an abstinence from, or moderation in, the act of generation, the former, regarding the object more with respect to moral purity, is applicable not to the gross act alone, but to the thoughts and feelings of the individual.

## ESSAY III.

## ON MARRIAGE.

BY the word *marriage* is to be understood the union of a man and woman, formed by virtue of a mutual contract, and sanctified by religion.* This union is a fact by which man is most distinguished from brutes.

It is not to indulge a gross appetite that such a union is contracted, but to unite two destinies liable to be severed by death alone, and to give birth to a family destined itself to produce others; thus adding new births to the chain of existence.†

Considered politically, marriage is a solemn union, having for its object the providing the State with legitimate citizens, and

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* Genesis. Chap. i. v. 27-28.

† Such being the express object of marriage, some writers maintained that the generative act should cease to be performed, when from age, infirmities, or other causes there is no longer any hope of offspring.

the arresting the disorders and avoiding the disgrace consequent upon an illegal union.

"The greatest legislators," observes Edmund Burke, "knowing that marriage is the source of all relations, and, consequently, the first element of all duties, have endeavoured by every means to make it sacred. The Christian religion, by confining it to the pairs, and by rendering that relation indissoluble, has, by these two things, done more towards the peace, happiness, settlement, and civilization of the world than any other part in this whole system of divine wisdom."*

The Jews, as well as the Christians, esteemed matrimony far before virginity, and the latter never appointed unmarried men to any public office of trust or confidence. Even the Pagans made laws in its favour, and for its encouragement; while the Spartans established a public festival at which, if any unmarried men were found to be present, they were flogged by the women, as being unworthy of serving the Republic and contributing to its glory and advancement.

The laws enacted by Augustus, the Roman Emperor, are well known.

"The greatest use of marriage institutions," observes Patey, "consists in their promoting the following beneficial effects:—

"1. The private comfort of individuals.

"2. The production of the greatest number of healthy children, their better education, and the making of due provision for their settlement in life.

"3. The peace of human society in cutting off a principal source of contention, by assigning one or more women to one

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* On the Sublime and Beautiful.

man, and protecting his exclusive right by sanctions of morality and law.

"4. The better government of society by distributing the community into separate families, and appropriating over each the authority of a master of a family, which has more actual influence than all civil authority put together.

"5. The additional security which the State receives from the good behaviour of its citizens, from the solicitude they feel for the welfare of their children, and from their being confined to permanent habitations.

"6. The encouragement of industry."*

It must not be imagined that the indissolubleness of the marriage tie has not met with able and resolute opponents; on the contrary—against the perpetuity of marriage the authority of some of the most enlightened minds may be quoted. Milton says—

"Indisposition, unfitness, or contrary humours proceeding from any unchangeable cause in nature, hindering and always likely to hinder the main ends and benefits of conjugal society, peace, and delight, *are greater reasons of divorce than adultery or natural frigidity.*"

Toland, Grotius, Erasmus, Swift, Leibnitz, Hume, the good and great philanthropist, Robert Owen, and Byron, have all openly avowed similar opinions, in which they are justified by innate principles and universal analogy throughout the animal creation.

On the same subject that sublime poet, Shelley, raised his powerful voice:

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*Philosophy, vol. i.

"The present system of constraint does no more, in the majority of instances, than make hypocrites or open enemies. Persons of delicacy and virtue, unhappily united to those whom they find it impossible to love, spend the loveliest season of their lives in unproductive efforts to appear otherwise than they are, for the sake of the feelings of their partners, or the welfare of their mutual offspring; those of less generosity and refinement openly avow their disappointment, and linger out the remnant of that union, which only death can dissolve, in a state of incurable bickering and hostility. The early education of their childern takes its colour from the squabbles of the parents; they are nursed in a systematic school of ill-humour, violence, and falsehood. . . . . The conviction that wedlock is indissoluble holds out the strongest of all temptations to the perverse; they indulge, without restraint, in acrimony and all the little tyrannies of dometsic life, when they know that their victim is without appeal. If this connection were put on a rational basis, each would be assured that habitual ill-temper would terminate in separation, and would check this vicious and dangerous propensity. . . . . Prostitution is the legitimate offspring of marriage and its accompanying errors. Women, for no other crime than having followed the dictates of a natural appetite, are driven, with fury, from the comforts and sympathies of society. It is less venial than murder, and the punishment which is inflicted on her who destroys her child, to escape reproach, is lighter than the life and agony and disease to which the prostitute is irrevocably doomed. Has a woman obeyed the impulse of unerring nature, society declares war against her; pitiless and eternal war; she must be the tame slave, she must make no reprisals; their's is the right of persecution, hers the duty of endurance. She lives a life of infamy;

the loud and bitter laugh of scorn scares her from all return. She dies of long and lingering disease. Yet she is in fault; she is the crminal; she, the froward and untamable child—and society, forsooth, the pure and virtuous matron, who casts her as an abortion from her undefiled bosom! Society avenges herself on the criminal of her own creation; she is employed in anathematizing the vice to-day which yesterday she was the most zealous to teach."*

With respect to the most important function of animal life —the generative act—it is curious to remark how differently it is designated according to the relative position of the parties performing it.

"The consummation of marriage, and of all connected with the great work of generation," observes Voltaire, "will be differently expressed by the husband, the medical man, and the lover. The words employed by the last will awaken nought but the image of delight and satisfaction; those used by the doctor will be thickly interlarded with anatomical terms; the husband will endeavour to express with decency and propriety what the young man has boldly uttered without regard to decency and propriety; while the priest will do what he can to give to what he says a religious tinge."

Whether the view taken by the Canonists, viz., *ad usum prolis suscipiandæ* (for the purpose of obtaining an offspring), be correct or not, it certainly accords with the Roman law upon the same subjects, which required that those who wished to marry should appear before the Censors and declare their object to be that of procreation; but independently of

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* The Christian Mythology unveiled, p. 262.

this it would be easy to shew in how eminent a degree the matrimonial tie conduces to the duration and felicity of human society, and how soon celibacy and the violation of this bond of families, draw after them the fall of states. It is, perhaps, the most general of all the institutions of man; no nation, however barbarous, having been found to whom it was unknown. Hence marriage has been, as truly as forcibly, designated "generation regulated by law," as the key-stone of the social edifice, and hence the reason that the ancients entrusted the *coitus*, or the union of the sexes, to so many Divinities.*

History proves what has been already observed—that the decadence of empires is precisely in relation with the increase of single men. In proportion as the Roman republic relaxed its rigid virtues, and relinquished its austere manners, the number of bachelors constantly increased. In vain the Senate enacted laws to compel them to marry, public immorality and the difficulty of supporting a family, on account of the increase of luxury, continually bade defiance to their wishes.

In the feudal times, the barons, as will be seen, paid but little respect to the matrimonial rights of their vassals. They could force them to marry any person they chose for them; they could sell the fruit of such marriage, or compel the parents to redeem them. Some idea may be formed of the situation of serfs in France from a chapter reprinted, at length, in the *Essais sur Paris* by Saint Foix.

The consent of one *William* Bishop, of Paris, is therein given

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* For the names of these divinities and the offices relative to generation, which they performed, see Meursin's Antiquit: Tom. v. *de puerperio.*

to the union of a young man with a young woman, provided that the children proceeding from the said marriage should be shared between the said *William* and the Abbey of St. Germain de Prez. Nor was this the only discouragement to matrimony in those times, for these feudal lords (ecclesiastical as well as secular) claimed the obscene and tyrannical right of passing the wedding night with the wives of their serfs, and of thus contaminating the purity of the nuptial couch.

The above author gives us an amusing anecdote on this subject. A nobleman, who possessed a large estate in Normandy, would, in the month of June, assemble round him all his serfs, including those who were awaiting his consent to consummating their marriage. After regaling them at a feast, and making merry with them, this facetious baron declared he was ready to give the wished-for sanction, but only upon certain conditions; thus, to one couple the condition was, that they should consummate their marriage up a lofty tree in his park; to another part, that they should consummate theirs in the river Ardelle, where they should remain for two hours with nothing on but shirt and smock.

This right, which was almost general throughout Europe, was gradually changed into more moderate pretensions; a commutation in money being substituted for it, which commutation was known in England during the Saxon rule by the name of *Marcheta Saxonica;* during the Norman dynasty by that of *Marcheta;** and in Scotland by that of *Marcheta mulierum.*

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* Ducange Gloss. in voce Marchetta.

The *Marcheta mulierum* was ordained by Eugenius, king of Scotland, who enacted that the Lord or Master should have the first night with every woman married to his tenant or bondsman, which ordinance was, afterwards, abrogated by Malcolm III., who ordained that the bridegroom should have the sole use of his wife, and for that privilege should pay to the lord a piece of money called *marca*. In the time of our Henry III. thirty-two pence were given to the lord by way of commutation. In France the lord of the soil, and the canons of the cathedral of Lyons claimed a right to lie, the first night of the nuptials,* with their bondsmens' wives. The Bishop of Amiens, and the monks of St. Etienne de Nevers, had, themselves, the same right, which they exercised with unblushing effrontery. The priests of Picardy asserted that no married couple could, without their permission, sleep together the first three nights; the monks of St. Théodard enjoyed the same privilege over the inhabitants of Mont Auréel, a town situated in the neighbourhood of their monastery.

Several German lords enjoyed the like privilege, but, much to their credit, restricted it to introducing a leg or a thigh into the bride's bed, and even this might be commuted into a fine called *cuissage* or *droit de cuisse*.

It is not surprising that such disgusting and tryannical pretensions should frequently excite indignation and resistance. In Scotland, it was the cause of several insurrections, and in Piedmont the lords of Persanni and of Presti, having refused to

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* Camillus Borelli. Bibliotheca Germ. vol. ii.

commute the pretended right into a fine, their subjects threw off the yoke, and placed themselves under the dominion and protection of Amadeus IV., Count of Savoy.

As before observed, in proportion as a nation proceeds to its decline, the number of marriages decrease, while that of single men becomes greater. Look at Rome when under the wise government, and at the same Rome crouching beneath the despotism of the Emperors. Despotic states are filled with monasteries and mendicant monks. It was, at the fall of the Roman Empire, that thousands of monasteries were founded in the East and in Europe. Compare Spain, Portugal, and Italy, peopled with monks and persons devoted to celibacy, with the northern states of Europe, as England, Switzerland, Holland, Sweden, &c., where the population daily increases, and where it would become too abundant were it not kept down by continual emigrations.

Thus men are induced to marry in poor but free countries where morality is respected; but, on the contrary, are led to celibacy in those where the morals are corrupted, and where reign luxury and all the superfluities of life. Marriage protects and supports morality, society, and the laws; celibacy necessarily produces adultery and prostitution, which vices dissuade men more and more from marriage. Disgust, the usual consequence of the facility of enjoyment, seeks after variety, till, at length, satiated with delight, the desire after irregular and unnatural pleasure is awakened.

It has, indeed, been remarked, that the most abandoned vices are nowhere more common than in countries where women are most accommodating and in greatest numbers; that is, in warm climates and under despotic governments.

"No one is ignorant," observes Bossu,* "how ancient is the vice of pederasty† throughout the East: among the Mohammedan polygamists the women shut up in harems tribadize one another, and when discovered are severely punished by the Turks, for so indulging themselves. Pederasty is also practiced among some savage tribes: for instance, among the Chactas of North America, who keep young catamities dressed in female attire."

It is obvious how much such causes must undermine governments, enfeeble nations, and enervate mankind; it is under such circumstance that the greatest political changes and the most disastrous revolutions take place. So true is this that the French Revolution of 1789 may be attributed quite as much, if not more, to the licentious manners of the two preceding reigns, than to the writings of the philosophers, or to any other cause which has been assigned. Were not the following description given by Bussy Rabutin‡ of the horrible and disgusting depravity of the court of Lewis XIV. confirmed by contemporaneous writers, it would be scarcely credible:—

"The very *accommodating* disposition of every lady at court had rendered their charms so worthless to the young men that even to look at them was almost unknown. In no other place in the world was *debauchery* (sodomy) in such vogue; and although the king had several times manifested and expressed the greatest horror at these kinds of pleasure, it was, in this alone, that he was neither followed nor obeyed. Wine,

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* Nouveau Voyage aux Indes Occident: Tom. iii. p. 108.

† According to Ovid, Orpheus was the first who introduced this disgusting vice.

‡ Histoire amoureuse des Gaules.

and what I shall refrain from naming, were so much the fashion, that scarcely any respect or consideration was paid to those who preferred a more decent mode of passing their time; and however great their inclination to live *agreeably to the dictates of nature*, yet, as the number of those who preferred indulging in the prevailing vice was greater, the bad example of these latter perverted the better inclined, who accordingly soon renounced their feeling for decency."

Among the votaries of this Socratic vice were no less personages than Monsieur (the king's brother) Condé, Conti, Permandais, Villars, Prince Eugène, &c., and as a proof how this detestable taste prevailed it will be sufficient to say that Morel, a gentleman of Provence, *sold boys as if they were horses*, driving his bargains in the pit at the opera.

It will scarcely be credited that a regular society or college of the *Cinœdi* was actually instituted; that three competitors for the grand mastership presented themselves, viz., the Count de Maricamp, the Duc de Grammont, and the Chevalier Tilladet. That all these three being deemed equally worthy (that is equally distinguished for obscenity and filthiness), three grand masters were, in consequence, established (in imitation of the religious society of St. Lazare). That a fourth grand master was afterwards added, in the person of the Marquis de Brion, and that to this society of disgusting and depraved iniquity was entrusted the duty of drawing up a set of canons, for the regulation of the fraternity, and which were as follows:—

I. That, for the future, no person shall be admitted into the order but such as have been previously examined by the grand masters, in order to ascertain if every part of their bodies were sufficiently healthy, so that they might be able to bear the trials (*austérités*).

II. That they take an oath of obedience, and also of chastity, with regard to women; and that, if any one should contravene it, he should immediately be turned out of the company, never more to re-enter it under any pretence whatever.

III. That every one shall be admitted into the society, without any distinction as to quality.

IV. That if any one of the brethren should marry, he must declare that it was for no other cause than the benefit of his concerns, or because all his relations compelled him so to do ; or because it was absolutely necessary that he should leave an heir behind him. That, at the same time, he must swear never to love his wife nor to lie with her after having got an heir; that, moreover, he must ask permission to have the said intercourse with his wife, which could be granted for one day only in the week.

V. That the brethren should be divided into four classes, in order that each grand prior might have an equal number of them. And that, with respect to those who should present themselves for the purpose of entering the order, the four grand priors should have them, turn by turn, on their list, so that no jealousy should injure their union.

VI. That the brethren should report to each other all that shall have taken place in private, so that if any office should be vacant, it might only be filled up by the most deserving, who would be discovered by this means.

VII. With respect to indifferent persons, or such as are not members, it is forbidden to reveal to them the mysteries, and that if any member should so do, he should be deprived of the enjoyment of them for one week, or even longer, should the grand master, to whose list he belongs, consider it expedient.

VIII. Nevertheless, such communication may be made to

persons who, it is hoped, may be induced to enter the order; this, however, must be done so discreetly, that success must be assured before making the attempt.

IX. That those who should introduce brethren into the convent, should enjoy, during two days, those to whom the grand masters were entitled, provided, however, that the former should have the precedence, and the latter be contented with their leavings.*

The king, who mortally hated this vice, having procured indisputable evidence of these excesses, banished some of the delinquents to towns remote from the court, had one of these princes horsewhipped in his presence,† and sent the other to Chantilli; and by these measures this detestable fraternity was broken up. As might be naturally expected, the ladies were exceedingly rejoiced at this *dénouement*, and some of the crosses belonging to the chevaliers, whom they judged worthy of being committed to the flames, were, accordingly, made a bonfire of, which was, however, but a poor vengeance for the insult and wrong done them.

But to return from this digression, savages are not very amorously inclined, especially in cold climates;‡ but in proportion as they become civilized, gallantry is more frequent, and more general. Aristotle has observed that the nations who are

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*Mémoires de la Duchesse d'Orléans (mother of the Duke d'Orléans, and Regent during the minority of Louis XV.) Tom. ii, p. 297 (notes) Brussells edition.

† There is a very scarce French edition of the above work, with a frontispiece representing the king witnessing this punishment.

‡ See Hennepin, Mœurs des Sauvages, p. 32. Rochefort, Antilles, p. 461. Buffon, Tom. xviii. Robertson, Hist. of America, vol. 1, book iv. De Paw, Ruherchy, sur les Américains, Tom. i.

the best acquainted with the real passion of love are the most warlike.

In the polar and temperate regions, nature allows only one woman to each man; in hot countries she instituted polygamy, by creating more females than males. The object of this is evident, for the inhabitants of the north are slower in their loves, their women a longer time faithful and less exposed to abortions than those in the south. Besides which, cold countries should not be so thickly peopled as hot ones, since they produce less food for their inhabitants. Warm countries, on the contrary, stimulate the passion of love to an excess; women soon become barren, and are subject to frequent abortions. The riches and fertility of the soil of those regions, moreover, easily maintain a large population. In cold temperatures, love comes late, remains chaste and temperate, and lasts a longer time than in warm countries, where it is awakened very early, flames with violence, and becomes soon extinguished.

European women, who marry in India, are exposed, like all persons of hot countries, to frequent abortions, and from this cause, perish by uterine hemorrhages.

As the activity of the uterus is diminished by the cold in northern countries, the state of pregnancy of women is more fortunate and less exposed to danger, they often produce twins; their accouchements are followed by fewer diseases, but they become more painful and difficult on account of the natural contraction of the parts in consequence of the cold.

The great heat of southern climes is less favourable to the increase of the species than the chaste loves of the northern ones. Poor and chaste people, such as those of cold and mountainous countries, follow the law of nature, without in-

dulging it by excess, as do the corrupt and luxurious nations inhabiting warm countries.

Thus population constantly increases with the former, and diminishes with the latter, for nothing is more hostile to production than the abuse of the sexual intercourse. Experience, however, proves that the coldness of climate is injurious to the population of the negroes, who are in better health and multiply more under the hottest sky; they there acquire that brilliant ebony black, the sign of their health, instead of those yellow, brownish hues which are the tokens of the diminution of their strength.*

It would appear, at first sight, that the most natural state of man is that of monogamy; the almost perfect numerical equality of the sexes, especially in our climates, the peace of families, the social happiness resulting from it, the mutual intercourse so necessary to ensure the rearing of the offspring, the example even of apes and other animals which approximate to us, and which have but one female at a time, as also that of many husbands who, in different countries, being allowed, both by the ecclesiastical and civil laws, to take several wives, prefer living with one alone, all these considerations appear to prove that man and woman should unite in pairs, to form and bring up their progeny. It is true that, according to the natural law alone, and independently of conventional and social ones, it is impossible to prove that the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, and even any employment of the sexual organs for mere voluptuousness' sake is absolutely illicit and criminal in the

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* See Nicholls, Remarks upon the Health and Life of the American Savages.

eye of nature, as the writers upon jurisprudence assert; in corroboration of which may be quoted the saying of Cardinal De Medicis—

"That there was no religion below the navel."

"Reason alone," says Bayle, "would suggest rather a community than a property of women;" and it is shown by ancient writers that this community existed in ancient times among many nations.

In many countries of the globe no marriage is contracted, but the two sexes mingle together as inclination prompts. This, according to Garcilas, was more particularly the case with the ancient Peruvians. At Camboge, girls who have been debauched are the first to find husbands, for prostitution is not considered disreputable.

This is similar to what Ælian relates of the Lydians, with whom, he says, it was the common practice for new married women to prostitute themselves before cohabiting with their husbands; but, upon the marriage being once consummated, they owed the latter an inviolable fidelity.

At Nicaragua the girls select their husbands in the midst of public festivals, in the same manner as was anciently practised in the isle of Candia.

Amongst the Kubasches, a nation of the Caucasus, widows present themselves veiled to the first comer, and the children proceeding from such unions are considered legitimate. Several savage tribes of North and South America exchange their wives at pleasure, and practise incest without any sense of shame.

In short, this general confusion of individuals might bastardize the whole human race by incestuous unions, proofs of which are to be seen among the nations which have not prescribed bounds in this repsect. Experiments made in Bohemia

prove that the finest races of horses always degenerate when they copulate in a direct line to their parents.

At Dobrota, a small city near the mouths of the Cattaro, the inhabitants, not marrying out of their own community, become, in this manner, almost nearly related to each other, so much so as to require dispensations before they can marry. This consanguinity appears to be the cause of their having few children, three at most.

Thus it seems that, independently of the feeling of modesty acknowledged by the almost universal consent of mankind, and which prohibits unions being contracted between relations, nature herself reproves and condemns them.

There is continually and universally a great loss of men, resulting either from war, shipwreck, unhealthy arts and occupations, accidents and excesses of every description, of which the last are the more frequent among the male sex; so that the number of women becomes equal, if not superior, to that of men, in our climates.

The loss of males occasioned by civil war, as well as the inconvenience resulting from it, appears from the following curious petition presented to Parliament in the year 1643:—

"*The Midwives' just petition or a complaint of divers gentlewomen of that faculty, showing to the whole Christian world their just cause of their sufferings in these distracted times, for their want of trading, which said complaint they tendered to the House on Monday last, being the 23rd January,* 1643.

"YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY SHOW:—

"That whereas many miseries do attend upon a civil war,

there is none greater than the breaking of that conjunction which matrimony hath once confirmed, so that women's husbands being at the wars, they cannot enjoy that necessary comfort and bevenolence which they expect from them.

"And whereas we are called Mid-wives by our profession, wee knowing the cases of women better than any other, being more experienced in what they sensibly suffer since the wars begun, living the religious lives of some cloystered nuns contrary to their own natural affections, if they could by any means help it, without wronging their husbands; and as women are helpers unto men, so are we unto women, in all their extremities, for which we were formerly well paid, and highly respected in our parishes for our great skill and mid-night industry, but now our art doth fail, and little getting have wee in this aye barren of all natural joyes and faithful onely in bloody calamities, wee desire, therefore, that for the better propagating of our owne benefit and the general good of all women, wives may no longer spare their husbands to be devoured by the sword, but may keep them fast locked within their loving armes, day and night, perfecting their embraces in such a manner as is not to be expressed freely, but may easily be conceived by the strong fancy of any understanding woman.

"We desire, therefore, that a period may be set to these unhappy differences, and that the naturall standard may no longer lye couchant, but that women may be fruitful vines; that there may by no armes, but such as will lovingly embrace their dear spouses again.

"Whereas all are not Penelopes that can withstand the siege of a long temptation, but must yield up the fort to the flattering enemie of her long preserved chastitie; it is better to keep than to make that fraile sexe honest; let, therefore, the

drummer wound the ayre no more with false stroaks, nor the pike bee bathed in the blood of guiltlesse men, let not the sword ravish from our bosoms the delight of our lives: this word—husbande—speaking benefit both to wives and midwives, since our felicitie cannot subsist without the others' fertilitie and fruitfulness, and, therefore, let us midwives, whome it most nearly concernes, desire that some order may be taken that the old song of England may not be againe revived, *Slow Men of London;* and that the celibate sexe of women may not lye in their beddes like cold marble images, cut out by some artificer's hand, but being fulle of warme spirit and life, they may oblegee the world to them by repairing the losses of the warre, and have husbandes, as formerly, at their command, to maintain them bravely, and bring them yearly under the delivering power of the midwife, which cannot be done unless the warres cease and men returne againe unto their wives.

"Printed in London."

From what has been already said, it will appear that polygamy is, on several accounts, dependent upon the relative number of the sexes, especially in the warm climates. It has been also practised among all the nations of the earth; it still exists among the Samoides, the Kamtschatkans, the Ostiacs, the Tongueses, and other Siberians, as well as among the North American savages, although in regions extremely cold.

Formerly, monogamy existed only among the polished nations of Greece and Rome, and among the Gauls and Germans, the two latter being the only monogamic nations among

the barbarians of those times. Bigamy was allowed at Athens, and Socrates himself had two wives.

No nations have become so polished as those who have been monogamic; for polygamy has always kept people in the slavery of ignorance, or in the deplorable barbarity of the savage state.

Polygamy authorized by law supports and necessitates despotism, because the slavery of the female is the infallible consequence, and domestic slavery is naturally carried into the civil state.

It was, doubtless, the laxity of morals so prevalent which caused the remarks of an Ottoman ambassador at Paris.

"We Turks," said he, "are very foolish to spend so much money on our harems; you Christians spare yourselves all this expense and anxiety, for your seraglio is the houses of your friends."

The general deduction from all that has been said is, first, that cold, poor, and rude countries, and republican states, are the most favourable for the multiplication of the human species, thus verifying the Chinese proverb—

"The palaces of the rich overbound with women; the cottages of the poor with children."

That monarchies, temperate climates, polished societies, and communities are less so. Lastly, that despotic empires, even when fertile, and nations where polygamy obtains, are hostile to it. In the first case, men become laborious, active, and simple in their manners; in the second, they are clever and industrious, and of polished manners; and in the last, they become idle, debauched, and corrupt.

That precocious marriages are unfavorable to population

was remarked by Aristotle, for, throughout the entire animal kingdom, the first fruits of the premature exercise of the reproductive faculty are always found to be imperfect. It is precisely the case with humankind, and the proof is that whenever precocious marriages are allowed, men are found to be small, weak, and ill-formed.

The extreme physical debility found in the Polish Jews and their offspring has, with justice, been attributed, by medical writers, to their premature marriages; and Montesquieu affirms that the fear of military service induced a great number of young men to marry before they had arrived at puberty. It is true that these unions were productive; but that disease and weakness soon deprived France of the generation thus produced.

We shall now proceed to consider the effects of marriage upon the animal system.

There can be no doubt that abstinence and excess are equally foes to happiness: a truth which is applicable with peculiar propriety to the sexual pleasure, which, when moderately enjoyed, is unquestionably conducive to the maintenance of health; for a too great abundance of the prolific fluid in a man full of vigour, and in the meridian of his vital powers, disturbs the animal functions, and even affects him mentally; and the best medical authorities are of opinion that the retention of the seminal fluid is liable to very serious evils.

Salutary, however, as may be the generative act, when performed in moderation, its excessive indulgence entails the most lamentable consequences.

The important part which the seminal fluid takes in the maintenance of health shows that it is always indispensable that

a portion of that fluid should be taken up into the mass of the blood after its complete elaboration; nothing can replace it; for the ablest physicians agree that the loss of one ounce of this humour is more debilitating than that of forty ounces of blood. As long, therefore, as the semen remains in the body, it must be admitted to be an agent which communicates to every part fresh strength and vigour.

The changes which are operated in us at the age of puberty, and which are not found in eunuchs, is an incontestable proof of it.

The writings of all medical men, ancient and modern, abound with striking observations and examples calculated to alarm, such as, by too frequent an emission of the prolific fluid, lay the foundation of numerous diseases, and thus sacrifice their health to their pleasure.

Hippocrates, the most ancient and exact of observers, was aware of the evils produced by the abuse of the pleasures of love. He describes them under the name of *Tabes dorsalis* (spinal consumption). This disease, he says, originates in the spinal marrow of the back. It attacks young married people, and those who are, unfortunately for themselves, of a libidinous temperament. These individuals have no fever, and, although their appetite is good, they gradually lose flesh, and, at last, pine away. Every time they have to perform either of the two principal natural secretions, they lose a very thin seminal fluid in large quantities. They are incompetent to the act of generation, and have, frequently, voluptuous but exhausting dreams.

Aretæus thus describes the evils produced by too great an evacuation of the semen:—

"Young men have the appearance and all the infirmities of old ones: they become pale, emaciated, effeminate, idle, spiritless, stupid, and even, sometimes, idiotic; their body becomes bent, their legs refuse to support them, they are disgusted with everything, and are fit for nothing."

There are, also, circumstances under which this gratification will occasion immediate death. Individuals suffering from disease of any kind, should wholly abstain from it, since it has proved fatal to many who had indulged in it before they had entirely recovered their strength.

Pliny informs us that the Prætor Cornelius Callus and Titus Ætherius lost their lives at the moment of the orgasm, to both of whom might, therefore, be applicable the French epitaph—

Je suis mort d'amour entrepris
Entre les jambes d'une dame,
Bien heureux d'avoir rendu l'âme
Au même lieu où je l'ai pris.

Many instances may be found in Montaigne. Galen reports the case of a man who, not being completely cured of a violent disease with which he had been afflicted, died the same night that he paid the conjugal tribute to his wife.

Van Swieten knew an epileptic person who expired on his wedding night from the same cause. Fabrice Holden records the unfortunate history of a young man whose hand had been amputated, and who, when the cure was nearly, but not quite, effected, having wished to embrace his wife, and being forbidden

by the surgeon, had recourse to masturbation, and died four days afterward.

Similar cases are reported by Hoffman, Boerhaave, De Sauvages, Bertholin, Chesnau, and others. Sir Alexandre Crichton, in his work "On the Disorders of the Mind," mentions the case of an attorney, who, being in his 78th year, married a young girl, and being of a very warm temperament, had also a mistress, whom he visited every evening, so that, by paying his devoirs to both these *Dulcinéas*, he must have been in a high state of excitement. The consequence was that he was seized with vertigo and insensibility, followed by loss of memory, so that instead of asking for bread, he would order his boots to be brought, and upon his order being obeyed, became very angry, as he wanted something to eat; but he still kept asking for boots instead of bread. Instead of calling for a tumbler, he would call for a chamber utensil, and when he wanted the latter, would order a tumbler or dish, and yet he was conscious he was wrong; and when the proper words were spoken by others, would recognize them.

The Marquis de la Chetardie, who was the French ambassador at the Russian court in the reign of Elizabeth, daughter of Peter the Great, was born under the following singular circumstances:—

His mother was Mademoiselle Monasterolles, who was taken from her convent at fifteen years of age, in order to be married to the old Comte de la Chetardie, aged eighty whose *nécessité de se marier*, was so imminent, that he expired in the arms of his young bride, on the wedding night immediately after consummation. In nine months after, La Marquise gave birth to a son, but felt so mortified by the catastrophe that befell her

husband, that she would never be called by her married name, and shortly afterwards retired to her convent, where she passed the remainder of her life.*

There are some individuals whose sensibility is so acute, and who are so disposed to epilepsy, that they have a real attack of it whenever they indulge in the veneral act.

Dedier knew a shopkeeper in Montpelier, who had this idiosyncrasy. Galen, HenriVan-Hers, Tissot, Hoffmann, Haller, and many other medical writers, report similar cases. Napoleon I. is said to have been subject to such attacks: one of which is said to have caused a serious misunderstanding between him and the Empress Maria Louisa. The facts were these. At the head of the Emperor's bed were two bells, one of which being rung, summoned his confidential valet, the other communciated with the Empress's bed-room. One night, when the Empress's place was filled by the celebrated actress Mademoiselle Mars, Napoleon finding, after the embrace, that the epilepsy was coming on, desired his fair companion to ring one of the bells, indicating the right one; but Madamoiselle Mars, alarmed at her bed-fellow's situation, entirely lost her presence of mind, so that, instead of pulling the bell which summoned the valet, she, most unfortunately, rang that which was to call the Empress, who instantly ran into the room, when a scene ensued more easy to be imagined than described. Mademoiselle Mars was subsequently *envitée* to absent herself from Paris for some time.

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* Piéces intéressantes et peu connues. Tom. iv.

This peculiar tendency to epilepsy has been observed, even among animals. M. Alphonse Menard had a setting dog of a very large size and very strong, which was seized with epilepsy whenever he coupled with a bitch. These fits were characterised by convulsions and privation of sense; their duration was variable and always proportionate with the ardour of the animal; when no longer coupling, the animal never experienced any attack of the kind.

The influence of physical love appears to be less prejudicial among women than among men, which may be easily accounted for: the properties of the fluid which they emit being less vital than those of the male semen. In fact, such unfortunate females whom want or dissoluteness have forced to become prostitutes, would soon become the victims of the exhaustion necessarily consequent upon their wretched trade, if, when circumstances permitted them enjoyment, they did not refuse it; for if, on the contrary, they took their due part in the orgasm, all the diseases consequent upon excessive debility must necessarily follow.

M. Tissot says, that, in the year 1746, "une fille agée de 23 ans, défia six dragons Espagnols, et soutient leurs assauts pendant toute une nuit; elle expira bientôt après. Cette scène affreuse se passa à Montpellier."

As to the long vexed question, which of the two sexes receives the greatest pleasure in the conjugal embrace, a question upon which Jupiter and Juno differing, was referred by them to Tiresias, that worthy, who had himself been a girl for seven years, and had been married as such, and who, in consequence, could speak with perfect *connaissance de chose*, gave his award in favour of Jupiter's opinion, declaring that the gratification re-

ceived by the female was ten times greater than that experienced by the male.

If the subject be considered physiologically, the structure of the generative parts would lead to the supposition that men are most favoured in the act of love. Indeed, the length of the vessels in which the seminal fluid is obliged to traverse in its endeavour to escape, presents advantages not found in women; the quality of the seminal fluid, much more volatilized, must affect those vessels much more voluptuously, while the delicate structure of the organ necessary to transmit this liquor must still further increase the orgasm.

Such are the advantages of the male. But, although the woman certainly cannot boast of such, yet the delicacy of her constitution, her weakness even, procures her others, of which men are deprived.

The parts which concur in exciting voluptuous sensations, are more numerous in women than in men, and the agitation of these suffices to excite the sensibility of the others. One part (the clitoris) especially endowed with an exquisite sensitiveness, is the seat of pleasure in women.

The imagination also affects women more than men, both in joy and sorrow; their nervous system is more susceptible of impressions, and it may, therefore, be affirmed, with tolerable correctness, that if the enjoyment of women be not so acute as that of men, it is much more extensive than ours.

It, therefore, appears difficult, if not impossible, to decide satisfactorily which sex receives the greatest share of delight in the act of love.

Let each sex, then, enjoy its peculiar advantages, and let not man, whose rapture is so extatic, think himself neglected

by nature, if woman appears to retain, for a longer time, the voluptuous sensation he has shared with her.

## MONOGAMY.*

From all the researches and facts hitherto made and investigated, monogamy appears to be a law of human nature in cold and temperate countries, and the most proper condition for an advanced civilization.

On the other hand, polygamy appears to depend upon the number of females as compared with that of men, especially in hot countries, where women are three times more numerous than males.

It has also been practised throughout all the countries of the East, so long back as the days of the Patriarch Abraham, as is proved by innumerable passages in the Bible. In former times, monogamy alone was practised among the polished nations of Greece and Rome, as well as among the Gauls and the Germans, the only monogamic nations among the barbarians.

Even bigamy was permitted at Athens, and even Socrates was a bigamist. Polygamy was permitted among the ancient Greeks. It was also defended by Euripides and Plato. The ancient Romans were more severe in their morals, and never practised it, although it was not forbidden among them, and

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* From *monos* single, and *gamos* marriage.

Marc Antony is mentioned as the first who took the liberty of having two wives.

From that time it became pretty general in the empire, until the reigns of Theodosius, Honorius, and Arcadius, who first prohibited it by an express law, A. D. 390.*

After this the Emperor Valentinian permitted, by an edict, all the subjects of the empire, if they chose, to marry several wives, nor does it appear from the ecclesiastical history of those times that the bishops made any objection to its introduction.

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Page 337, *et seq.*

## ESSAY IV.

## ON CIRCUMCISION.

CIRCUMCISION, or the practice of cutting off the prepuce or foreskin, is a usage of the remotest antiquity, widely diffused over Africa and the East, and founded, almost exclusively, upon either religious or political motives.*

Sanconiathon, Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo, informs us that the Egyptians and Ethiopians practised this painful rite; Herodotus adds the Colchians. "The inhabitants of Colchis, Egypt, and Ethiopia," says he, "are the only people who from time immemorial, have used circumcision. The Phœnicians and the Syrians of Palestine acknowledge having borrowed this custom from Egypt. These Syrians, who lived near the rivers Thermedon and Parthenus, and their neigh-

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* Eusebius Præp: Evangel.

bours, the Macrones, confess that they learned it, and this recently from the Colchians. These are the only peoples who use circumcision, and who use it precisely like the Egyptians."*

As this practice can be traced both in Egypt and Ethiopia to the remotest antiquity, it is impossible to say which first introduced it. The Egyptians certainly communicated it to the other nations by means of their commercial intercourse. The Phœnicians, who were connected with Greece, did not any longer imitate the Egyptians in this particular, their male children not being circumcised. This practice, which, among the Egyptains, most likely arose from causes connected with health, as well as from those of religion or policy, soon became neglected by the common people, so that, in the time of Pythagoras, it was observed by priests and philosophers only; whether it was that the national prejudices still held a place in the affections of the enlightened few, or that the rite was already made the distinctive mark of philosophical and religious sects; however this may be, the connection of the Jews and their legislator Moses, with the Egytians, was too close for the former not to have derived from the latter the solemn rite of circumcision.

Although the Bible informs us for what reason the chosen people of God received circumcision, it is silent as to the causes which, long before, induced the Ethiopians, that is the Egyptians and the negroes, to adopt it.

It appears very probable that Upper Egypt was peopled by the Ethiopians, and that the Egyptian customs bore a considerable affinity to those of the former people, hence circumcision

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* Beloe's Herodotus. Enterpre. Chap. iv.

may have originated with the Ethiopians, who may have been compelled to adopt it on account of health. Gibbon is of this opinion.

"I am aware," he says, "how tender is the subject of circumcision, yet I will affirm that the Ethiopians have a physical reason for the circumcision of males and even of females."*

That it was practised in Ethiopia long before the introduction of Judaism or of Christianity appears certain, from the testimony of various ancient writers.

There cannot, therefore, exist a doubt in any unprejudiced mind, that the practice obtained in Egpyt for a very great length of time previously to its being adopted by the Hebrews.

It is spoken of, for the first time, in the Book of Genesis, chap. xvii., v. 10-13:—

"This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you, and it shall be a token of the covenant between me and you."

Abraham hastened to obey the precept, the non-compliance with which was to be punished with severe penalties, and, in one day, Ishmael, his son, all his slaves, and Abraham himself, underwent the operation, which was performed by the Patriarch's own hand. It is worthy of remark, as a curious circumstance, that it was not until his return from his first journey into Egypt, that Abraham, who had hitherto called himself *Abram*, added a syllable to his name, at the same time that he curtailed a portion of his skin, thus effecting a kind of compromise, or *quid pro quo*. A different reason is assigned by the

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* Decline and Fall. Chap. iv. (note).

old Scholiast, for Abraham having introduced this rite, and it is as follows:—

"The Jews," says he, "were deprived of their foreksin, and were, therefore, called *curti;* the reason for which was that Moses, the king and legislator of the Jews, having, from want of cleanliness, a diseased prepuce, was compelled to cut it off, and fearing that this privation, if known to his subjects, might expose him to ridicule, ordered them all to undergo the like operation."*

Up to this period, this stock of the house of David was ignorant of a practice which was one day to distinguish them from among the other nations.

None of the antediluvian patriarchs, neither Noah, nor any of his sons, were circumcised, while that operation had, on the contrary been practised, from time immemorial, on the borders of the Nile. If, therefore, the assertion of Herodotus be entitled to credit, viz., that the inhabitants of Colchis, on the borders of the Pontus Euxinus (Black Sea), were an Egyptian colony, practising circumcision, and that they were settled there by Sesostris, the observance of this rite must have already been for many ages in Egypt when God commanded the chief of the chosen people to adopt it. Since Abraham was born 2222 years before the common era, and Sesostris must have conquered Asia about 3326, that is to say, more than eleven hundred years ago, it is true, this calculation places the reign of the Egyptian conqueror before the epoch assigned by

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* Bagster's Horace. Sat. lib. i. 9.

A Query.—May not this be considered as the prototype of the fable of the fox who had lost his tail?

the different chronological systems, but the difficulty will cease, when it is considered that, without failing in the respect due to the sacred Scriptures, it may, for philosophical reasons, be denied that the deluge was universal, which it has, hitherto, been supposed to have been the case, rather in accordance with the letter than with the spirit of the Book of Genesis.

Circumcision is found, not only among the nations who believe in one God, but also among those who groan under the most degrading superstitions, and was, most probably, introduced into the nascent civilization before men were acquainted with the use of iron; it must be dated from the obscure ages, when our progenitors were not far removed from the condition of mere mammiferæ or brutes, being ignorant of the arts, the invention of which is attributed, in the Book of Genesis, to Tubal Cain, and made their rude cutting implements of stones or flints. Hatchets and knives are always found made of these materials among nations which are yet in their infancy; copper and brass come next, and iron, the last; hence it follows that for the ceremonies of the primitive religion, which, in the social order, were anterior to the working of mines, flints have been preserved, from a more respectful motive as connected with the origin of the worship, when, for instance, the people of Adamic race practised embalming or circumcision, the bodies of the dead were opened, and the foreskin of the living was cut off with flints; and we read in Pliny, that the priests of Cybele mutilated themselves with a sharp flint or with the fragment of a broken jar.

Notwithstanding the command received by Abraham, circumcision was not so permanently established among the Jews, but they ceased to submit to it, so that Moses was obliged to restore the rite by causing the son he had by Zipporah to be

circumcised, the instrument employed in the operation being a sharp flint. At a still later period, that is, nearly three hundred years after the treacherous and infamous massacre of Sheckem, Joshua received the command of God to make sharp knives and to circumcise the people, the majority of whom had neglected to undergo that rite in the desert.

"At that time the Lord said unto Joshua, make thee sharp knives and circumcise the children of Israel a second time, and Joshua made him sharp knives, and circumcised the children of Israel at the 'hill of the foreskins.' "*

Since Joshua's time, however, the people of God became more observant. Some apostates, notwithstanding, have been found among them, who, about the time of the Maccabees, endeavoured to efface from themselves this mark of distinction, but they were accursed in consequence; Jesus Christ was circumcised.

St. Paul contended in favour of circumcision against St. Peter, and caused his disciple Timothy to submit to the rite. The first bishops of Jerusalem were all circumcised, but the custom was afterwards abandoned by them. The Coptic and Abyssinian Christians retained the usage: the latter even considered it as advantageous to their women on the score of cleanliness, for those who had not undergone the operation were contemptuously called *cofa* (unopened), and were held in such abhorrence that the vessel out of which they had eaten was broken in pieces, as if polluted.†

The Jews and Mohammedans, as also some negro nations,

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* Joshua, chap. v., ver. 3.

† Voltaire, Philosophie de l'Histoire.

who were alike unacquainted with Moses and Mohammed, are the only communities whose males are circumcised.

Although circumcision is not, as we have said, so much as mentioned in the Koran, it is nevertheless considered by the Mohammedans to be an ancient divine institution, confirmed by the religion of Islam; and, indeed, the Mohammedans have a tradition that their prophet declared circumcision an indispensable rite for men and an honourable one for women. The Arabs, who practised circumcision for many ages before Mohammed, had learnt it from Ishmael.

Many attempts have been made by modern writers to account satisfactorily, and upon physiological principles, for a practice so generally adopted throughout the East, as circumcision is. Some travellers pretend to have discovered the cause in the intention of the primeval legislators to prevent libertinism by suppressing, to a certain degree, amorous propensities, but in this case the result of the prevention was diametrically opposite to that which was desired.

Other writers suggest that the idea of sacrificing to God a portion of the most important organ of man, of that member which enables him to enjoy the only immortality to which he has a right to aspire, may have been one reason, at least, for instituting so singular a custom. It appears, however, natural to suppose, from this rite having been adopted by so many nations, and those chiefly of warm countries, that it should possess some physical utility, although none has been assigned by Mohammedans and Eastern Christians.

Philo* is of opinion that circumcision was instituted for the

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* De Circumcisione. Vol. ii. p. 211.

prevention of a disorder of a very dangerous character and very difficult to cure, called *carbo*, and to which all those who retained the prepuce were peculiarly liable.

M. De Paw* thinks that both the Egpytians and Abyssinians were compelled to be circumcised, in order that they might be protected from a worm which in warm climates was apt to breed between the prepuce and the glans penis.

It is also affirmed that the generality of Orientals would have the prepuce naturally too long, and, consequently, very inconvenient for the sexual union, if the prevention of shortening it were not adopted; and the reason of the inconvenience is that heat dilates the parts of the body: thus the breasts of women become elongated and flabby, in proportion as the climate they inhabit is hotter. The same thing occurs with their sexual parts, since the nymphæ and the clitoris of eastern women appear much more developed than in our climates. To such an extent is this the case, that nymphæ of the length of one's finger are found among the Hottentot women. This enlargement is analogous with that of plants and flowers, in proportion as the temperature is higher and the soil more genial.

This elongation of the prepuce may also oppose the free egress of the seminal fluid, in the conjugal embrace, and it is to circumcision that the fecundity of the Jews, and of other circumcised people, is be to attributed.

"The pleasure of the sexual union is greatly increased by the

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* Paw.

prepuce," says Bauer,* "for which reason women prefer cohabiting with those who retain it than with the Turks or the Jews."

It must not, however, be supposed that this inconvenient length of the prepuce is common to all the Orientals, many individuals being met with among them having the prepuce naturally so short as scarcely to cover the glans penis, and native writers affirm that such is the case with those who are born during the wane of the moon. Blumenbach assigns a much more probable cause: he says that a literary man of great acuteness, when conversing with him on the subject of casual mutilations becoming, in process of time, hereditary marks of distinction, started the following objection—if artificial mutilations have this effect, children born of circumcised parents must often be born without the foreskin, which does not appear to be the case.

"At this time," continues Blumenbach, "I was acquainted with only one instance of this kind as reported in Gerbach's Journal, but one example only did not appear to me to be of sufficient weight to justify drawing a conclusion from it. I, however, one day happened to ask a Jew of this place, a man not destitute of learning, and well acquainted with the ritual of his nation, and was told by him that it frequently happened that Jewish children were brought into this world with so short a foreskin as to require an expert and careful hand to circumcise them. This innate deficiency is distinguished by a par-

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* Bauer. De causis fecunditatis gentis circumcisæ. Præputium voluptatem in coitu auget, unde fæinæ præpupiatis concubitum malunt agere quam cum Turcis et Judæis.

ticular Hebrew appellation, viz., mould (*modl*), or born circumcised. This person's own father, who had circumcised above 700 boys, and who was celebrated on account of his expertness, in this case, not at all an uncommon one, often spoke of the great difficulty of performing the operation under such circumstances."

Another motive for the introduction of this usage may have been cleanliness, so important in warm climates, and which requires that there should not be allowed to accumulate around the base of the glans that white caseous matter which the glands are continually secreting there, more especially when their activity is increased by the heat of the climate. In fact, a negligence in this particular, in European travellers, in the East, often causes them painful inflammations and excoriations in that part of the body, while, on the contrary, the circumcised Orientals are in no way exposed thereto, as the removal of the prepuce renders it impossible for that humour to remain and accumulate under its folds.

An English physician, who had resided for a considerable time at Aleppo, was of opinion that in warm countries a greater degree of moisture was contracted under the glans penis than in cold ones; a circumcised person washes himself in that part of the body with a greater facility than one who is not so, especially if, being a Mohammedan, he is forbidden to employ more than one hand—circumcision must, in this case, be a great convenience, and might have been a cogent reason for the natives to retain this rite after having once adopted it.

The matter secreted from the neck of the glans, from behind the ears, and some other parts, is apt to become more acrid than it does in colder climates; the urine also, which, in summer, is voided in small quantities, is sharp, high-coloured, and

quickly putrifies. Hence, perhaps, it is that Christians are more subject to prurient efflorescences than circumcised persons. The glans of the circumcised is certainly more callous than that of Christians, who seem more liable to venereal affections than the Turks, who seldom have a gonorrhea accompanied with formidable symptoms.

Virey thinks that the only reason for the introduction of circumcision was that of preventing the detestable and fatal practice of masturbation, onanism or self-pollution, for he observes that as the heat of the climate rapidly developes the passions and promotes, in an excessive degree, the desire of sexual union, the Egyptian, Hebrew, and Arabian legislators were desirous of putting a restraint upon self-abuse, and, therefore, introduced the rite as an obstacle to a vice so frequent and so fatal in those warm climates, especially among young persons.

The Romans considered circumcision as barbarous and disgraceful, but the account given of it by Tacitus, although imperfect, is, nevertheless, correct as far as it goes.

"They" (the Jews), says he, "instituted the circumcision of the parts of generation as a mark of distinction from among other nations."

The sarcastic *Curtis Judæis* and *Judæus Apella* of Horace,* and the illiberal misrepresentations of Juvenal are well known.†

The manner and time of performing this ancient rite varies according to the country. Among the Jews circumcision was

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* Hor. Sat. Lib. i. 9.

† Juvenal, Sat. x.

to take place within eight days after the birth of the child. The ceremony, as observed by them, is thus described by Leo de Modena, a celebrated rabbi—

"Two seats are prepared, in the morning, with silken cushions, one for the godfather, who holds the child, the other for the Prophet Esdras, who is supposed to be present invisibly. The person who is to circumcise, called in Hebrew *Mohel*, and who is distinguished by the length of his thumb-nail, brings the necessary utensils—the razor, styphic, linen fillet, and oil of roses, to which some add a shell-full of sand to put the prepuce in when abscinded. A psalm is sung until the child is brought into the room by the godmother, attended by a crowd of women, and who delivers it to the godfather, none of the females entering the room. The godfather being seated places the child in his lap; then the circumciser takes the razor, and preparing the child for the operation, says—

> "'Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who hast enjoined us circumcision!'

And so saying, cuts off the thick skin of the prepuce, and, with his finger nails, tears away the edges of the remaining skin in several places, sucking the blood two or three times as it jets forth, and putting it into a glass of wine; then he lays dragon's blood on the wound with powder of coral, and, lastly, a compress of oil of roses, and then binds up the whole. This done, he takes the glass of wine, and, blessing it, adds another benediction for the child, and names it."

The laceration of the remaining skin is the reason why the circumcised Jews are cured much sooner than the Turks. The Turks, before they commence to circumcise, squeeze the skin

with small pincers, in order to numb the parts, and then cut the prepuce off with a razor. The wound is cured by the application of caustic, or an astringent powder, particularly burnt paper, which, according to Chardin, is the best remedy. They never circumcise till the seventh or eighth year, and, sometimes, the eleventh or twelfth, as they do not consider the rite as necessary to salvation. The same author informs us that the operation when performed upon grown persons is attended with considerable pain; that they are obliged to confine themselves to the house for four or five weeks, and that even death is sometimes the consequence.

In Madagascar the operation is performed by cutting off the flesh at three several times, and the most zealous, of the relations present catches hold of the prepuce and swallows it.

In the Maldive islands children are circumcised at the age of seven years, being previously bathed in the sea for six or seven hours, in order that, by the skin being thus made softer, it is better prepared for abscission.

Circumcision is practiced among the Caffres and Maschappas, and it is performed on their young men at the age of fourteen and upwards. For this purpose they are seized, as they seldom submit willingly, and are forced into a house where the operation is performed, after which they are not permitted to sleep, until they are heated, while to keep them awake a man in each district is paid to keep beating them on the tips of their fingers. The circumcised are then painted white, and furnished with an apron of leaves. When thus painted and dressed, they dance together, at a little distance from the kray or village, but are not permitted to enter it until they are perfectly recovered. Having washed off the paint in the river, the women present them with a garment, the house in which they were circumcised

is burnt, and now, being considered as men, each is presented with a young woman.

Herrera informs us that a kind of circumcision existed, in his time, among the Mexicans, though they are very far from Judaism or Mohammedanism. They not only cut off the prepuce, with great ceremony when the child is born, but the ears also.

Among the nations inhabiting the banks of the Maranon, circumcision is practised among the men, and excision among the women.

The Otaheitans are represented by Dr. Hawkesworth* as performing circumcision by merely slitting the prepuce through the upper part, in order to prevent its contracting over the glans penis.

The Persians circumcise their children, sometimes within ten days after their birth, and at other times at ten years of age; that of girls, or excision, as Bruce calls it, is not known. The wound is healed with caustic, astringents, and burnt paper. Persian women of the lower class have a singular superstition: such as are barren swallow the part of the prepuce cut off in circumcision, and having so done feel fully convinced that it will prove an infallible and sovereign remedy for sterility.

Circumcision is, by no means, a dangerous operation for men, for we see in Genesis that Abraham was 99 years old when he performed the operation upon himself; but Hamor and Shechem, his son, with the Hivites, did not escape so easily, for

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* Hawkesworth's Voyages.

the two princes having consented to become circumcised, with all their people, in order that Shechem might obtain the beautiful Dinah, were treacherously murdered.

"And it came to pass on the third day, when they were sore, that two of the sons of Jacob, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males.

"And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out."*

Circumcision was, with the exception of the Mohammedan population, unobserved, either as a religious rite or a hygienic practice, for, as regards the first, the Hindoos, when they invaded that country, fourteen or fifteen centuries ago, or about 3000 years before our era, brought with them the worship of the Phallus, and ingrafted it, as it were, upon their own *Trimourti* or *Trinity*, a religion which henceforth adopted as its emblem or symbol the *Linga* or Lingham, a single obelisk or pillar, the representative of the male organ of generation. Hence to mutilate, by circumcision, that sacred prototype of the Lingham, would have been deemed an act of the greatest and most unpardonable impiety.

As connected with considerations of health and cleanliness, although the heat, particularly in the Deccan or the south, was very great, its ill effects as experienced in Africa, Egypt, and Ethiopia, were either prevented or counteracted by the facility

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* Genesis, chap. xxx., v. 25-26.

afforded by bathing in the refreshing streams so abundant throughout that vast peninsula.

In modern times, renegadoes who embrace Mohammedanism, suffer it at all ages with little inconvenience. The Count de Bonneval, a French gentleman, and the Duke de Riperda, a Spanish minister of state, the celebrated Jew Spinosa, and the notorious Lord George Gordon, all underwent the operation without experiencing any ill effects, although advanced beyond the middle age.

It is not, however, the male sex only that is subjected, in some countries, to this cruel operation. The inhabitants of many eastern nations are accustomed to make their female children undergo a kind of circumcision, which consists in cutting off the most obtruding parts of the *vulva*.

The circumcision of females consists in cutting off a portion of the clitoris, which part, in some, particularly southern climes, attains, in women, to such a size, as to render the use of the knife indispensable. Such is the account given by those celebrated physicians Paulos Æginctes, lib. v. c. 7.

A contemporary medical writer also observes that the Egyptians judged it indispensable that the operation should be performed before the excrescence had increased much in volume, more especially in marriageable girls. Herodotus is silent upon this custom. Strabo mentions it, but is mistaken in asserting that the Jews performed this operation upon girls. The women of Egyptian or Coptic origin are generally found to have attached to the os pubis a fleshy, thick, flaccid and pendant substance, covered with skin, some idea of which excrescence may be formed by comparing it both in size and form to the carbuncle which hangs from the beak of the Turkey cock. This excrescence increases with age, and has been ob-

served half an inch long in a girl of eight years old, and not less than four inches in a woman of four or five and twenty. The circumcision of it consists in the removal of the troublesome deformity. The operation is performed between the ages of seven and eight years, and a superstitious tradition has fixed the period for practising it, at the commencement of the overflowing of the Nile. Women of Upper Egypt are the operators.

"Who wants an expert circumciser?" is a common cry in the streets of Cairo. A razor and a pinch of fine cinders suffice for the cure.

It has been remarked by Balon, Thevenot, and others, that all the Coptic women, even those who are free from this appendage, have the nymphæ uncommonly and inconveniently large.

This abscission is of the remotest antiquity, and is practised by all the Arabian physicians; it exists not only in Egypt and Ethiopia, but towards the Persian Gulf, at Benin, and in Central Africa. Cleanliness has rendered it necessary. In some climates, the nymphæ, which, from their great length, become inconvenient, for, in the vicinity of the clitoris of women is collected an acrid and stimulating humour called *smegma* (from its resemblance to soap), and this secretion is partly covered by the nymphæ. This white saponaceous and almost fœtid substance, is one of the most powerful stimuli of the sexual organ. Thus, such persons as observe great cleanliness, are, generally, less given to venery than those who are negligent in this respect.*

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* See Sonnini, Voyage en haute et basse Egypte. *Niebbuhr*, Beschreibung von Arabien. Balon, Thevenot.

In cold, or even in temperate regions this secretion becomes less abundant and, as it is, consequently, less active in its effects, the sexual organs are more quiescent than in southern regions.

In some countries of Arabia and Persia, as, for instance, near the Persian Gulf, and on the shores of the Red Sea, the operation is never performed upon young females until they have passed the age of puberty, because there is no elongation, or scarcely any, before that time. In other climates, the excessive increase of the nymphæ takes place much earlier, and is so general among some tribes, such as those who dwell on the banks of the Benin, that it is the practice to circumcise all the girls as well as boys within a week, or at most a fortnight, after their birth, the object being, not only to remove an obstacle to coition, but to prevent women's abuse of each other.*

The following is Bruce's account of this singular custom:†

"Strabo informs us that the Egyptians circumcised both men and women, like the Jews. I will not pretend to say that any such operation ever did obtain among the Jewish women, as Scripture is silent upon it, and, indeed, it is nowhere pretended to have been a religious rite, but to be introduced from necessity in order to avoid a deformity which nature had subjected particular people to in particular climates and countries. We perceive that, among the brutes, nature created the animal with the same limbs or member all the world over does yet in-

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* See Tulpuis, and the Philosophical Transactions, No. 32, page 624. Badham's Abridgement.

† Bruce's Travel's in Abyssinia. Vol. v. p. 52.

dulge itself in a variety in the proportion of such limbs or members. Some are remarkable for the size of the heads, some for the breadth and bigness of their tails, some for the length of their legs, and some for the size of their horns. There is a district in Abyssinia, within the perpetual rains, where cows, of no greater size than ours, have horns, each of which would contain as much water as the ordinary pail used in England does; and I remember, near the frontiers of Sennaar, near the river Dendo, to have seen a herd of many hundred cows, every one of which had the apparent construction of their parts almost similar with that of the bull, so that, for a considerable time, I was persuaded that they were oxen, their udders being very small, until I had seen them milked. This particular appearance, or unnecessary appendage, at first made me believe that I had found the real cause of circumcision from analogy, but upon information they did not hold. It is, however, otherwise in the excision of women. From climate, or some other cause, a certain disproportion is found generally to prevail among them; and, as the population of a country has, in every age, been considered as an object worthy of attention, men have endeavoured to remedy this deformity by the amputation of that redundancy. All the Egyptians, the Arabians, and the nations to the south of Africa, the Abyssinians, Gallas, Agoids, Gafals, and Gorgas, make their children undergo this operation, at no fixed time indeed, but always before they are married.

When Roman Catholic priests first settled in Egypt, they did not neglect supporting their mission by temporal advantages and small presents given to the needy people, their proselytes; but, mistaking this excision of the Coptish women

for a ceremony performed upon Judaical principles, they forbade, upon pain of excommunication, that excision should be performed upon the parents of children who had become Christians.

The converts obeyed, the children grew up, and arrived at puberty; but the consequences of having obeyed the interdict, were, that the man found, by choosing a wife among the Catholic Copts, he subjected himself to a very disagreeable inconveniency, to which he had conceived an unconquerable aversion, and, therefore, he married heretical women free from this objection with whom he relapsed into heresy.

The missionaries, therefore, finding it impossible that their congregations could ever increase, and that this unforseen obstacle frustrated their labours laid their case before the college of cardinals *de propaganda fide* at Rome. They took it up as a matter of moment, which it really was, and sent over visitors skilled in surgery, to make a fair report upon the case, as it stood.

They, on their return, declared that the heat of the climate, or some other natural cause, did, in that particular nation, invariably alter the formation, so as to make a difference from what was ordinary in the sex in other countries, and that this difference did occasion a disgust which must impede the consequences for which matrimony was instituted.

The college, upon this report, ordered that a declaration being first made by the patient or her parents that it was not done from Judaical motives, but because it disappointed the ends of marriage, the imperfection was, by all means, to be removed, so that the Catholics, as well as the Copts, in Egypt, have undergone excision ever since.

This is done with a knife or razor, by women generally, when the child is above eight years old.

A dispute, which arose between the Capuchin friars and the Jesuits at Pondicherry, and which was also settled by a compromise, is too curious not to be here reported. Beside the Lingham already mentioned, the equally significant *Yoni*, or *Ateis*, is to be seen, being the female organ of generation. It is sometimes single, often in conjunction, for the Indians, believing that the emblem of fecundity might be rendered more energetic by combining the organs of both sexes, did so unite them, giving to this double symbol the name of *Pulleiar*. This symbol is highly venerated by the sectarian worshippers of Khiva (the third god of the Trimvurti), who hang it round their necks, as a charm or amulet, or, enclosing it in a small box fasten it on their arms. The Indians have, also, a little jewel called *taly*, worn, in like manner, by females round their necks as a charm. It is presented to them on their wedding day by their husbands, who receive it from the hands of the Brahmins. Upon these jewels is engraved the representation either of the Lingham or the Pulleiars.

A Capuchin missionary had a serious dispute with the Jesuits residing at Pondicherry, which was referred for decision to the judicial courts. The disciples of Loyola, who can be toleration itself when toleration furthers their crafty and ambitious views, had declined all interference with the above custom.

M. Tournoæ, the Pope's legate apostolic, who regarded the matter as one not to be trifled with, strictly prohibited the *taly*, enjoining the female converts to substitute in its place, either a cross or a medal of the Virgin. The Indian women, strongly attached to their ancient customs, refused obedience. The

missionaries, apprehensive of losing the fruits of their zealous labours, and seeing the number of their neophytes daily diminishing, entered into a compromise by adopting a *mezzo termine* with the females in question, as it was agreed that a cross should be engraved upon the *taly*; an arrangment by which the symbol of Christian salvation was coupled with that of the male and female *pudenda*.

The practice of circumcision is very general in Omar, at least, in the country of Sohâr and among the greater part of the nations inhabiting both shores of the Persian Gulf; and it is equally so with the Mohammedans and Copts in Egypt. At Bagdad, the women of Arabian race cause their daughters to be circumcised.

The Turks have not the custom, and in proportion, as we remove from the frontiers of Arabia, less numbers of circumcised women are found in the Turkish towns. Certainly, one advantage gained by the women from this operation is the greater facility of washing themselves, but the chief object is to prevent the erection of the clitoris, which, in the Arabian language, is called *Sunbula*.

The women who circumcise the girls at Kaberé, are as well known as midwives are in Europe, and it is even said that when their services are required, they are called from out the street; a clear proof that the operation is not much thought of.

Sonnini says, that previously to his visiting Egypt and having an opportunity of ascertaining the nature of the circumcision of the Egyptian women, he had imagined that it consisted in the amputation of the nymphæ or of the clitoris, according to circumstances, and according as those parts were more or less elongated.

He adds that it is even very probable that the operation

takes place, not only in Egypt, but likewise in several countries of the East, where the heat of the climate may produce too great a development of those parts.

This author, suspecting that there must be something more than an excess in those parts which, far from being met with in all women, could alone have given rise to an ancient and general practice, determined to submit the matter to the test of experience, and, accordingly, he witnessed an operation of this kind, which he describes in the following words:—

"I first examined a little girl about to undergo the operation. She was about eight years of age, and was an Egyptian by birth. I was much surprised at the appearance of a thick, flabby, flaccid, fleshy excrescence covered with skin. This excrescence originated above the joining of the lips of the pudenda, and hung down about half an inch. A tolerably correct idea may be formed of it by comparing it, for size, and even for form, to the pendant caruncle with which the beak of the Turkey cock is provided. The female about to operate seated herself upon the floor, and having also placed the little girl in front of her, she, without the least preparation, began to remove the singular excrescence in question, the only instrument she used on the occasion being a bad razor. The child did not give signs of feeling much pain. A pinch of fine cinders was the only topical remedy applied for the wound, notwithstanding that it bled very profusely. The female operator touched neither the nymphæ nor the clitoris, neither of which were externally visible in the child. Such is the nature of the circumcision of Egpytian girls, and it may well be supposed to be a necessary operation, for this species of elongated caruncle increases with the age of the individual, and were it left to itself would, in time, cover the entire opening of the vulva. The

woman who performed the operation assured me that, at the age of twenty-five years, the excrescence acquired the length of four inches. It is peculiar to women of Egyptian origin."*

A few observations upon sterility and some of its causes may not be deemed irrelevant in this place. It is admitted by all medical writers that sterility depends more upon women than on men, and that natural heat is one of the principal instruments of all our actions, and that the defect, failure, or falling off of which heat is the principal cause of sterility in both sexes. If it be wanting to the otherwise complete state or condition of the genital apparatus of man, all action of those parts is interrupted, and, under such circumstances, generation is not to be expected.

As to the other sex, let a woman be in the flower of her age, in the enjoyment of perfect health, and married to a husband of a sound and vigorous constitution, with whom she freely enjoys all the delights of the connubial state, yet, notwithstanding all these advantages, if she be not, naturally, by her constitution, disposed to contribute to the making of a child, never can she expect to enjoy the pleasing satisfaction of being honoured with the name of mother; for if her *pudenda* or natural parts be contracted, and she abandons herself too much to the impulses of her love, if an excessive heat consumes or preys upon her internal parts, if her menstrual discharge be irregular or possesses not the red colour peculiar to it, there is but little chance of her conceiving. She burns and, as it were, dries up the semen received by her from the male, and if, by

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* Sonnini, Voyage in Egypt.

chance, a child be conceived, it is ill-formed, and does not remain nine months in its mother's womb.

If, on the contrary, an excessive coldness, and much humidity occupy the principal parts of the matrix, if her reins or loins be contracted, and the belly be narrow, and if the only part of the body on which the hair appears be her head, never will she be able to retain the semen which she has received, and, consequently, conception is impossible; or should a child be conceived, it would be suffocated by the great humidity of its mother's parts of generation, and would be born prematurely. So much is this the case, but such a female could never bear a child unless these great defects were corrected, which is scarcely ever the case.

It is the same with women who have an ill-formed womb, whether from some natural defect, or from accident. With respect, however, to the above circumstances, some only of them would be considered by the canon law such as to justify a divorce. It is only such inconveniences and such obstacles which are so great as to oppose the pleasures of love, and hinder a man from enjoying the conjugal embrace, that can be the legitimate cause of the dissolution of a marriage; for if the woman be very contracted, and if the vagina be almost closed, or by the excessive size of the clitoris, or other irremediable causes, it justifies the belief that such a woman is absolutely sterile, since it is impossible for her to bear the caresses of her husband.

The excessive size of the clitoris has been mentioned as being an insuperable obstacle to the sexual union, and a very extraordinary, but well authenticated, instance of its so being is reported in the *Annales Medicales et Physiologiques*, published at Paris in the year 1789. It is as follows:—

A man was greatly surprised on his wedding night, while fondly smoothing his hand over the naked person of his bride, at feeling a member as stiff as his own virile one flapping against him. In the utmost confusion, not to say, alarm, he got out of bed, imagining, at first, that he was bewitched, for in those days the power of sorcery was an article of almost universal ar implicit belief, or, if not, that it was a trick played upon him by substituting in the marriage bed a man instead of his beloved spouse.

No sooner, however, had he procured a light, than he recognised the countenance of his wife, who fondly entreated him to return to bed, but all her entreaties failed to rouse him from the state of surprise, bewilderment, and disappointment in which he was plunged; and when, after some time, love vindicated its power over him, his genital organs refused to lend their assistance. Their disobedience was not, however, of long duration, and the man returned to his bed, and began, a second time, to renew his amorous attack; but, upon this second tentative, he was as much surprised as before, and his astonishment became still greater when he found that he could not disengage himself from the arms of his beloved, who, in proportion as her passion increased, clasped him still closer and closer to her breast. It was now that he no longer doubted of being the victim of witchcraft, for upon this occasion, by a strange metamorphosis, the man became, as it were, a woman, while the latter was playing the part of one of the male gender. At length, the man having recovered himself somewhat, began to examine the cause of his embarrasment. He no sooner cast his eyes upon his wife's *pudenda* than a penis, as long and stiff as his own, presented itself to him. Questioning his wife upon the subject, she informed him as delicately as she could,

that she had imagined all women to have been formed like herself in those parts. She told him, moreover, that during the excessive cold of winter, her clitoris almost entirely disappeared, being at that time neither longer nor thicker than the half of the little finger; but that, as the summer heat set in, it bceame excessively enlarged.

The husband, after maturely considering what was best to be done under such extraordinary and delicate circumstances, proposed that the case should be laid before an able and experienced surgeon; she cheerfully consented, and his opinion being that a portion of the clitoris must be amputated, but before the time fixed for the operation the nervous system of the patient became so highly excitable, that it was absolutely necesasry to abandon altogether having recourse to excision.

## ESSAY V.

## ON EUNUCHISM.

THE unfortunate beings who, whether in ancient or modern times, have been condemned, either by jealousy, vengeance, or unnatural lust, to the loss of their virility, have been distinguished by different appellations, according to the degree of privation suffered, the *modus operandi*, or the offices sometimes filled by them, &c.; and hence the terms—*eunuch*, *castrato*, *spado*, *thlasias*, *thlibia*, *cremaster*, and *bagoas*.

Of all these appellations, the one most common is that of *eunuch*, a word compounded of two Greek ones, signifying *bed* and *to have* (I have, possess, guard); the occupation of eunuchs in the East being generally that of guarding the harem.

Another etymology has, however, been proposed by some one evidently well disposed towards the emasculated, viz., Greek words signifying *on account of having good intellects.* The term *castrato* comes from the Latin *castrare*, to cut off, the testicles being removed by the knife.

Vossius gives two etymologies for *spado*, the first being the Gallic word *spata*, a razor, that being the instrument with which the operation is performed; the second from *Spada*, the name of a Persian village in which this cruel practice was first introduced. The *Thlassiæ* from a Greek word, signifying *to crush*—their testicles being destroyed by crushing. The *Thlibiæ*, from another Greek word, meaning to *rub*, from the same effect being produced by strong frictions made with hemlock and various other herbs, in the same manner as the ancient Romans arrested the signs of virility in their catamites, by rubbing their chin and sexual parts with an infusion of hyacinth root.

This mode of emasculation, if we may credit Zacchia,* was practised by wild boars, which animals, when tormented with a leperous itching of the scrotum, rub that part against the stump of trees, thereby obliterating their testicles and depriving themselves of the power of generation.

The *cremasters* were so called from the destruction of the muscle called in Greek *cremaster*, by which the testicle is suspended and drawn up, or compressed in the act of coition. As to the term Bagoas, it is a Babylonian one, signifying *eunuch*, and appears to have been generally applied to eunuchs of all the above descriptions, being also occasionally used to signify the office filled by them.

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* Zacchia Quæstion, med. legal.

By the word *eunuchism*, therefore, must be understood the condition of an individual who has been partially or wholly deprived of his generative organs; of a being who is a nullity on the face of the earth, and who, in his ambiguous existence, is neither male nor female. This miserable creature, alike an object of contempt to men, on account of his emasculation and of abhorrence to women, by reason of his impotency, unites himself with the strong against the weak, and is fated to carry within his breast passions, the gratification of which is utterly denied him.

The cruel and detestable practice of castration has been performed from time immemorial by the Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, &c. Frequent mention of it is also made in the Old Testament; nor was it unknown to the Greeks and Romans, as appears from the writings of certain of their medical and satyrical authors.*

Semiramis, Queen of Assyria, the widow of Ninus and mother of Ninyas, whom she put to death, was the first who introduced the custom into that country, in order, according to some authorities, that she might meet with less opposition to her female rule;† while others assert that she was actuated by jealousy, inasmuch as having enjoyed the handsomest men in her army, she ordered them to be castrated immediately after-

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* This offence was regarded as so atrocious by the old laws of England as to amount to felony: "et sequitur aliquando pœna capitalis, aliquando perpetuum exilium, cum omnium bonorum ademptione." Bracton, fol. 144.

† See Zacchia Quæst. med. leg. lib. ii. tit. iii. quæst. viii. p. 9, and also Aristot. Hist. Animal, lib. vi.

wards to prevent them from affording the like pleasure to other females.

Andramytis, King of Lydia, is said to have been the first who invented the castration of females, an operation which consists in the extirpation of the ovaria, and is far more dangerous and more often fatal than that of the testicles. Women so castrated no longer menstruate. Paul Zacchia, Boerhave, and others assert that the object of this castration was to extinguish in them all appetite for the male sex. Dioderus Siculus says that the Egytians made it the punishment for offences against modesty, and travellers state that the same custom existed, not only in Persia, but also in Hindoostan, where an adultress was condemned to lose her ovaria before being put to death, upon the same principle that, in some countries, parricides, before being beheaded, have their right hand cut off, in order that the criminal may be more particularly punished in that part which was the instrument of his guilt.

It is possible, however, that this castration was nothing more than nymphæotomy, which is still in use in countries where the nymphæ of women are inconveniently large. Paul Zacchia asserts that this operation was, at a very remote period, performed upon females in Germany, and Frankius reports the case of a daughter of a gelder of animals, who, on account of her excessive lasciviousness, was deprived of her ovaria by her father.

The Greeks, for a considerable time, held eunuchs in abhorrence, nor were they introduced into Greece and Italy until the time of the Emperors.

"These unhappy beings," observes the philosophic Gibbon, "the ancient production of Oriental jealousy and despotism,

were introduced into Greece and Rome by the contagion of Asiatic luxury. Their progress was rapid, and eunuchs, who in the time of Augustus, had been abhorred as the monstrous retinue of an Egyptian queen, were gradually admitted into the families of matrons, of senators, and of the emperors themselves."*

The most general classification of eunuchs is into two kinds, viz., those who have been deprived of their testicles only, and those whose entire genital apparatus has been amputated; but the different questions which, at various times, arose concerning the marriage of persons accused of being eunuchs, and which frequently involved the restitution of the wife's dowry, induced jurisconsults to examine more particularly this description of persons, and to divide them into four classes.

The first consists of such as are born so, they being eunuchs, properly so called. A sigular instance of this kind was to be seen, in the year 1704, in the streets of Berlin: this was a cripple, entirely without posteriors, that is, having neither hips nor buttocks, on which account he was carried about in a box on a man's back. He had a well shaped head, furnished with chestnut-coloured hair, with a pleasing countenance. Although more than twenty years old, he had not the least signs of a beard. His hands and arms were well proportioned, and his body tolerably well shaped. His height was between two and three feet, and when out of his box, he supported himself on a block of wood, walking, as it were, upon his hands. He had two orifices, like other men, for the natural ejections; the one,

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* Decline and Fall. Vol. ii. p. 292.

in front, was very small and short, and below it was a kind of scrotum very lank and flabby, in which not the least sign of a testicle was to be seen. Upon his parents being questioned they declared that he had always been in that condition from his birth.

The second class of the castrated included those who had been deprived of their virility, either with or without their consent, who are incapable of performing any of the functions of generation, and who are obliged to void their urine by means of an artificial pipe.

The third class consists of such whose cremaster muscles have, by means of continual friction, disappeared, and become altogether obliterated.

The fourth class included those who, from natural malformation, frigidity of temperament, or accident, were incapacitated from performing the generative act.

To these four may be added a fifth class, embracing those who voluntarily eunuchised themselves in order to escape the leprosy and the gout, preferring exemption from these diseases to the pleasures of sexual intercourse. The classification made by Jesus Christ is somewhat similar:

"For there are eunuchs which were so born, from their mother's womb, and there are some eunuchs which were made eunuchs of men, and there be eunuchs which have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake."*

With respect to the first of the above classes, namely, those who are born eunuchs, it must be observed that the absence of

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* Matthew, ch. xix. v. 12.

apparent testicles in the scrotum should not be always regarded as a mark of eunuchism, since they may have remained in the abdominal cavity: this has been proved by numerous anatomists, and is the case with birds, rabbits, and almost all young animals. It very rarely occurs that the testicles of adults are hidden; nature seems, at the period of puberty, to make an effort to cause them to appear, and their descent is often the effect of some violent movement, such as a fall or a leap. But, if even the testicles do not descend, the party is not, on that account, the less fit for the generative act; on the contrary, it has been remarked that persons in that state are more vigorous in the amorous conflict than others.

Such as have only one testicle (monorchides) are not, for that reason, disqualified from propagating their species—witness Sylla, the dictator, and the Tartar Tamerlane, both of whom had this conformation, the existing organ, in this case, being considerably larger and able to fulfil the duty of two.*

The *Triorchides*, or such as have three testicles, are not always more lascivious and ardent than the biorchides.

"Quand J'étais à Rome," says the Marquis d'Argens, in

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* Pope Sextus V. allowed the *monorchides* to marry. "Ex dictis," says Dens, "patet spadones et eunuchos utroque testicule carentes non posse matrimonio inire valide. *Uude Sextus V. matrimonie ab hujus modi Eunuchis in Hispania contracta irrita esse, de crevit, secus enim si alterutro duntaxat careal.*—DENS.

From what has been said it is clear that geldings and eunuchs cannot validly enter into matrimony. For which reason Sextus decreed that the marriages contracted by such kind of eunuchs in Spain were null and void, for it were otherwise if they wanted but one testicle.

his edition of Cellus Lucanus, "il y'a trente deux ans, un châtré, fils d'un domestique du Cardinal Octoboni, á qui l'on avait ôté lex deux testicules, s'apperçut, un jour, d'un troisieime qui, dans sa jeunesse avait été attaché à la racine des bourses, et qui, par la suite du temps s'etait détaché et avait occupé la place d'un de ceux qu'on lui avait enlevé. Cette decouverte fit perdre la voix, à ce châtré, qui pouvait avoir vingt deux ans lorsque ce nouveau testicule parut."

Two curious instances may be cited of eunuchism produced by accident.

The first one, related by Paulus Jovianus, is that of one Simon Baschi, who, when very young, was emasculated by a sow which, while he was asleep, tore off and devoured his virile member.

The second is that of no less a person than Boileau, the celebrated French poet and critic, who, when an infant, had received a like injury from a Turkey cock. This anecdote, which was first published in the "*Année litéraire*," and repeated by Helvetius and others, is asserted by some to be a malicious falsehood, merely invented to explain the poet's aversion to the fair sex so strikingly exhibited in his tenth satire.

With regard to the fifth class it is certain that leprosy never attacks eunuchs.

Mézerai says—

"J'ai lu," says he, in his 'Histoire de France, "qu'il y avait des hommes qui appréhendaient si fort la ladrerie, cette vilaine et honteuse maladie, qu'ils se châtraient pour s'en préserver."

That eunuchs never become bald, and that they are exempt from the gout is affirmed both by Hippocrates and Pliny.

As before observed, the term *eunuch* has also been employed to signify officers holding high rank in the courts of eastern princes. These persons were so called merely because of their office, since they filled posts formerly held by eunuchs, properly so called, *ratione impotentiæ et adempta virilitate.* Such was Potiphar, mentioned in the Old Testament,* who bought Joseph of the Ishmaelitish merchants, and who could not possibly have been a real eunuch, since he had a wife and a daughter named Asenech, who is supposed to have been married to Joseph.

It is, indeed, clear from history, both sacred and profane, that, as before observed, the principal offices at court were entrusted to eunuchs, who enjoyed, in the highest degree, the confidence and favour of their princes. Thus we see in the Book of Esther, that seven eunuchs were the ordinary officers of King Ahasuerus, and that the eunuch Egeus, in particular, had the duty of guarding the king's concubines. There were two others, named Bagathan and Thares, who kept the first entrance to the king's palace.

The history of Judith informs us that the ushers of the chamber of Holofernes were eunuchs, and that Pagoas or Bagoas was the chief of them.

The eunuch of Queen Caudaces, who was baptized by Philip, was one of the chief officers of that queen, and had the charge of all her treasure.

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* Genesis, chap. xxxvii. ver. 36.

It was a eunuch who commanded the troops of Zedekiah, King of the Jews. Cyrus having vanquished his enemies, and taken Babylon, established his residence in the royal palace of the greatest city in the universe, but, being apprehenisve for his personal safety, determined upon forming a body-guard, all of whom were eunuchs; the reason for which, as well as that for his appointing them to be officers in his palace, are given in the Cyropædia.*

The remark made by Gibbon upon this fact is too judicious to be here omitted.

"Cyrus," he says, "had observed in animals that, although the practice of castration might tame their ungovernable fierceness, it did not diminish their strength or spirit, and he persuaded himself that those who were separated from the rest of humankind, would be more firmly attached to the person of their benefactor. But a long experience has contradicted the judgment of Cyrus. Some particular instances may occur of eunuchs distinguished by their valour, and their fidelity; but if we examine the general history of Persia, India, and China, we shall find that the power of the eunuchs has uniformly marked the decline and fall of every dynasty."†

As to the objects for which this cruel practice was first introduced, besides that already assigned, the most general one was that of obtaining safe and trusty guardians for women, whether wives, concubines, or daughters; individuals so oper-

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* Cyropædia. Book vii.

† Decline and Fall. Vol. ii. p. 293, note (*).

ated upon being considered as incapacitated from infringing the chastity of the one or the conjugal fidelity of the other.

From time immemorial, indeed, eunuchs have been employed to guard the women in the harems of the East, and to fulfil near the sovereigns or wealthy princes of Asiatic countries the most intimate duties. Sometimes they acquired, by the most shameful means and detestable compliances, a great ascendancy over their masters, as *Bagoas* (this word, in the Babylonian dialect, signifies *eunuch*) over Alexander the Great,* *Sporus* over Nero, &c. And when the Roman emperors imitated the luxury and the effeminate and haughty etiquette of the Eastern despots, they had also eunuchs in their palaces.

In consequence of this, eunuchs became an important article of commerce. Black eunuchs appear to have been preferred.

Eunuchs are found in the catalogues of Eastern commodities, which, about the time of Alexander Severus, were made subject to the payment of duties.

Men have, likewise, been castrated for the purpose of being offered up as victims to false gods, an inhuman custom eloquently inveighed against by St. Augustine, in his work—"*De Civitate Dei.*" The priests, also, in many kinds of worship, were required to be eunuchised, in order that the sacred office might be administered by persons who were pure and chaste. This was always the custom of the Athenians, of the Galli, priests of Cybele, as well as those of Diana of Ephesus.

That castration was inflicted as a punishment in the remotest times we learn from Diodorus Siculus, and that it was so em-

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* See Curtius (Rufus Quintus). Lib. vi. cap. 5, and lib. x. cap. 1.

ployed by the Romans might be shown by numerous quotations from their wroks—three will here suffice:—

"Carbo Accienus being taken (in adultery) by Vibienus, and Pontius by P. Cerneo, were castrated."*

"The eunuch Thelin, when begown'd he saw
Sage Numa cried 'A punk condemned by law.' "†

ELPHINSTONE.

"Audacious stripling, lost to shame!
To tempt an armed tribune's dame!
And dost thou, youngster, basely fear
The chastisement all boys revere?
No more be this thy boldness propp'd,
Thine *all of manly will be lopp'd.*
The law, thou sayst, will not allow,
Does law, my lad, thy pranks allow?"‡

ELPHINSTONE.

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* Carbo Accimus a Vibreno, etiam Pontius a P. Cernio deprehensi (in adulterio) castrati sunt. Pat, Mag. lib. vii. cap. i. 13.

† AD SPADONEM.

Thelin, viderat in toga, spadonem,
Damnatam, Numa dixit esse matronem.

Martial. Epig. lib. x. ep. 51.

(NOTE.) Roman women convicted of adultery were compelled, when they went abroad to wear the *toga* to distinguish them from modest ones, who were habited in the *stola*.

‡ Uxorem armati, fututis, puer Hylle, tribuni,
Supplicium tantum, dum puerile times?
Vœ libi! dum ludes, *castrabere*, jam mihi
Non licet hoc: quid; tu quod facis, Hythe, licet?

Martialis Epig. Lib. ii. ep. 60."

In later times Justinian made castration the punishment for sodomy.

The Gauls also awarded this penalty, in many cases, and a law of the Salii provided that if a slave committed fornication with a maid servant, he should, when she was dead, be castrated.

A like penalty is found in the law of the Twelve Tables.

The Emperor Domitian, at the commencement of his reign, forbade the castration of boys, a decree which elicited a fine epigram from Martial, in which he says—

"No longer cut by dealers void of pity,
The youth shall mourn the loss of his virility."*

The emperor Adrian interdicted the castration of such men as desired to undergo the operation, and the Emperor Justinian confirmed the law of his predecessors:

"We therefore decree that whosoever, in any part of this our Republic, dares to castrate any person, or even shall have already dared so to do, shall, if indeed, they who so dare, or have so dared, be men, suffer what they have so inflicted upon others."†

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* "Non puer avari sectus arte magonis
Virilitatis damna mæret ereptæ"
Mart. Lib. ii. ep. 7.

† Sancimus, igitur, ut qui in quo cunque Reipublicæ nostræ loco, quamcunque person um castrare presumunt aut etiam presumpserient, si quidem, viri sunt qui hoc facere presumunt aut presumpserint, idem quod aliis fecerunt, et ipsi patientur.—Just. Novel. 42, cap. 1.

Ovid, too, long before had maintained the justice of such a punishment:

"Whoe'er from youth does cut his manly part,
Should, with the self-same wounds be made to smart."*

The Lex Talivinis was abolished by the emperor Leo as incompatible with the character of Christianity.

Boethius, in his history of Scotland, states that if any person were visited with madness, epilepsy, gout, leprosy, or any other such dangerous disease which was likely to be propagated from father to son, he was, according to the ancient law of Scotland, to be castrated; if a woman were so afflicted she was carefully secluded from all company of men, and, if by chance, having some such disease, she was found pregnant, she, with her offspring, were to be buried.

Eunuchs were not allowed to make a will, some privileged ones about the persons of princes being excepted. At their death all their property devolved to the public treasury. They could not adopt children, nor appear as principals in any legal act.

By a decree of the Grand Chamber in Paris, in 1665, it is adjudged that a eunuch cannot marry, not even with the consent of the woman and of all the relations and friends on both sides.

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* "Qui primus pueris, genit atia membar recidit
Vuluera quæ fecit, debuit ipsee pati."
Ovidius. Amor. Lib. ii. eleg. 3.

The Council of Nice condemned such as from an indiscreet zeal, or from a wish to guard against sensual gratifications, should castrate themselves. Persons mutilating themselves were also excluded from entering into Holy Orders.

According to Luitprand, Merbonius, and other writers, it was a common practice to punish military crimes, such as desertion, mutiny, &c., in this manner, and the following curious instance of its infliction as such, in comparatively modern times, is given by a French historian, as having occurred in the reign of Henry I. of France.

"The Greeks who were at war with the Duke of Beneventum had carried it on with much cruelty. Theobald, Marquis of Spoletto, the Duke's ally, having come to his aid, and taken several prisoners, ordered them to be castrated, and sent back, so mutilated, to the Turkish general, together with a message to the effect that he had so done in order to oblige the Emperor, whom he knew to be particularly fond of eunuchs, and that he (the Marquis) would do all in his power to provide his Imperial Majesty with many more such. The Marquis was about to keep his word, when, one day, a woman, whose husband had been taken prisoner, came, all in tears, to the camp, and entreated to be allowed to speak to Theobald. The Marquis having enquired the cause of her grief—

"'My lord,' replied she, 'I am surprised that so great a hero as you are, can make war upon us poor women, when men can no longer resist your arms.'

"Theobald having replied that he had never heard of any war having been carried on against women since the time of the Amazons—

"'My lord,' rejoined she, 'can a more cruel war be waged against us than that which deprives us of health, pleasure, and

children? When you make eunuchs of our husbands it is not them only that you mutilate, but us, also. Within these few days you carried off our cattle and baggage, without my complaining of it, but the other loss which you have inflicted upon many of my fellow countrywomen, being an irreparable one I have come to entreat the conqueror's compassion.'

"The army was so pleased with the woman's simplicity and address, that they restored her husband to her, together with all that she had been plundered of. As she was going away, Theobald asked her what he should do to her husband, were he again to be taken in arms.

"'His eyes, his nose, his hands, and feet,' replied she, 'are all his own property; of them you may deprive him, should he deserve it, but leave, I pray you, what belongs to me.'"

A depraved and unnatural taste was another rife cause of castration, for, in order to gratify the vilest and most detestable propensities, the most beautiful boys that could be found, from the age of fourteen to that of seventeen, were chosen for emasculation, a practice which St. Gregory bitterly complains of in his 31st discourse

Juvenal, likewise, stigmatizes it thus:—

> "No tyrant e'er within his dread abode
> A youth deformed depriv'd of his virility."*

And Seneca, in his *controversiæ*, thus indignantly reprobates the practice:—

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* " . . . . . Nullus ephebum
Deformem sæva castravit in arce tyrannus."
Juvenal. Sat. x lin. 306.

"Wealthy men employ their riches in collecting around them, in violation of nature, crowds of emasculated minions, mutilated for the express purpose of being the better able to bear patiently the excess of impudicity; and this the wealthy do, because being ashamed that they are themselves men, they do all in their power to render men as scarce as possible."*

Lastly, persons have been reduced to this miserable state, from mere cruelty, an instance of which is thus given in Hume:†—

"Geoffry, the father of our Henry II., being master of Normandy, the Chapter of Seez presumed, without his authority, to proceed to the election of a bishop; upon which he ordered the whole of them to be castrated, and caused all their testicles to be brought to him on a platter."

Hume's sarcastic remark on this fact is—

"Of the pain and danger they, the monks, might justly complain, yet since they had vowed chastity he deprived them of a superfluous treasure."‡

The instance of Abelard is too well known to require repetition.

The outrage perpetrated by Pantaleon, as related by Heraclides, is, certainly, one of the most horrible on record:

"Over the Elei," says he, "reigned Pantaleon, an oppressive

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* Principes viri, contra naturam, divitias suas exercent, excisorum greges habent, exoletos suos, ut ad longiorem patientiam impudicitiæ idonei sint; et quia ipsos pudet viros esse, id agunt, ut quam pauci viri sint.

† Hist. of Eng. Vol. i. p. 348.

‡ " " Vol. i. p. 258.

and merciless tyrant, who, upon certain envoys arriving at his court, ordered them to be castrated, and then compelled to eat their own testicles."*

Several instances occur in history of persons who, from various motives, have voluntarily castrated themselves. Lucian, in his dialogues, relates the following one:—

"Combabus, a young lord at the court of Syria, was chosen by his sovereign to attend the Queen upon a journey she was about to undertake. Combabus, who was in the flower of youth and of great personal beauty, being apprehensive that the king would conceive some jealousy against him, earnestly entreated that the honourable post might be conferred on some other nobleman, but being unable to obtain his request, he considered himself as a dead man, unless he could find some expedient to avert so great a danger. Seven days only were allowed him to prepare for the journey. After reaching home and lamenting the dreadful alternative which presented itself, either of losing his life or his sex, he, with a resolute hand, amputated the tokens of his virility, and having embalmed them, deposited them in a casket, which he sealed. Upon his departure, he gave the box to the king, in the presence of many nobles, humbly desiring his majesty to keep it till his return, as it contained what he valued more than gold and silver, or the richest jewels, and was as dear to him as his life. The king having sealed the box with the royal signet, delivered it into the keeping of his head chamberlain.

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* Apud Elchos regenavit Pantaleon injuriosus et immanis. Is, legatos qui ad se venissent castrans, proprios testiculos edere coegit.—Heraclides.

"The queen's journey lasted three years, and failed not to occasion what Combabus had forseen. She became desperately enamoured of the young man, having exerted all her resolution to preserve her modesty and dignity. As in most cases of a similar kind, her attempt to extinguish did but add fuel to her amorous flame, and, no longer able to vanquish her desires, she went to the bed-chamber of Cambobus, and, discovering her love for him, implored him to return it.

"After various excuses, all of which she refused to listen to, he had no other resource than to own his condition, and lest she should be incredulous, gave her ocular proof of his impotency. This revelation, in some degree, cooled her ardour for him, but she, nevertheless, would be continually with him, endeavouring to console both herself and Cambobus for the impossibility of gratifying her love.

"In the meantime, the king being informed of her conduct, recalled Cambobus. This order by no means astonished the young man, and he boldly returned, well knowing that his justification lay deposited in the prince's closet. He was immediately committed to prison, and, a short time after, the king sent for him into the royal apartment, and there accused him, in the presence of those who had seen the casket given, of adultery and treason.

"Witnesses were produced who swore that they saw him enjoy the queen. He made no answer, till about to be led forth for execution, when he said that he did not die for having defiled the king's couch, but because his majesty would not return the casket he had put into his royal hands before starting upon his journey.

"The king now commanded the casket to be brought to

him, and, upon its being opened, the contents fully proved the innocence of the accused. Cambobus then explained to the king the motives which had prompted him so to mutilate himself, and had the satisfaction of regaining the monarch's confidence, and of seeing his false accusers fall under condign punishment."

The voluntary castration of Heliogabulus is, perhaps, one of the most singular and disgusting examples of depravity to be found in a nation, itself the most corrupt and immoral.

"The masters of the Roman world," says Gibbon,* "affected to copy the dress and manners of the female sex, preferred the distaff to the sceptre, and dishonoured the principal dignities of the empire by distributing them among his numerous lovers; one of whom was publicly invested with the title and authority of the emperor's, or as he more properly styled himself of the empress's husband; a dancer was made prefect of the city, a charioteer, prefect of the watch, a barber, prefect of the provisions. These three ministers, with many inferior officers, were all recommended, *enormitate membrorum.*"

For this account Gibbon was much indebted to Lampridius, one of the *Historiæ Augustæ Scriptores*, who, speaking of this disgrace to manhood, says:—

"Quis enim ferre posset principem, per cuncta cava corporis libidinem recipientem, cum ne belluam quidem, talem quis quamque ferat."

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* Decline and Fall. Vol. i. p. 126, and note (‡) Bohn's edit.

"Agebat præterea fabulam Paridis, ipse Veneris personam subiens; ita ut subito vestes ad pedes defluerent, nudus que una manu ad mammam, altera pudendis adhibita.*

Origen, one of the fathers of the Christian church, is a melancholy proof how far the reason may be perverted by erroneous views of religious matters.

Origen was born at Alexandria in Egypt, in A.D. 185. He was educated for the church, and became profound in the science of theology. The testimony of St. Jerome sufficiently proves this, for at the time of his greatest opposition to Origen he owned him to have been "magnus vir ab infantia."† As his profession often obliged him to be in the company of women as well as of men, in order to deprive the pagans of every pretext for suspicion as to immoral conduct resulting from his youthful years, he resolved to become a living commentary upon the Saviour's saying—

"There be some who have made themselves eunuchs for the Kingdom of Heaven's sake," and, therefore, according to Fulgos, "ut corpus ab omni venerea labe mundum servaret omnique suspicione careret, secis geni tabilis membris, unuchum se fecit."‡

He endeavoured to keep this act secret, but was unable to prevent its being discovered. He, however, lived long enough to condemn this his error. The passages in which he repro-

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* Historiæ Augusta, p. 233.

† Epistola 5, ad Pammachuim de erroribus Originis.

‡ Lib. 4, cap. 3.

bates it are in his 15th sermon upon St. Matthew, c. 19, v. 12, and in his work against Celus, lib. 7.

Some of Origen's tenets were so extraordinary as to draw upon him the condemnation of the fifth General Council, assembled at Constantinople in A. D. 533. Amongst these were the following:—

"That in the Trinity the Father is greater than the Son, and the Son greater than the Holy Ghost. That the sun, moon, and stars were animated and endowed with rational souls. That after the resurrection all bodies will be of a round figure. That the torments of the damned will have an end, and that as Christ had been crucified in this world to save mankind, he is to be crucified in the next to save the devils."

Valius, a disciple of Origen, was the founder of a sect called the Palesians or eunuchs, but this heresy did not last long.

1. Because it was condemned by the first General Council of Nice.

2. Because they who had undergone the operation had suffered such agonies, and had so narrowly escaped death, that few persons were disposed to become proselytes.

3. Because castration was forbidden by the Roman laws, and it was necessary to apply to a civil magistrate for permission to inflict it. The shame and ridicule consequent upon a refusal, which was almost ever given, deterring the aspirants.

The following are a few well authenticated instances of voluntary self-castration similar to that of Origen:—

In 1750 at Fayence in Provence, a person having thought that by mutilating the organs of a lascivious temperament he should free himself from the prurient ideas which continually beset him, performed this dreadful operation upon himself, with

his own hand, but a copious hæmorrhage ensuing, he would have bled to death but for the opportune arrival of a surgeon. After his cure, assuming the garb of a recluse, he retired to a hermitage near Banquole in Languedoc. It appears, however, that the painful sacrifice he had made was far from being followed by the desired impassibility, for, upon being asked by a friend if he was free from all carnal desires, he frankly replied

"Quant aux désirs, c'est à peu près, la même chose."*

A young monk, who was incessantly tormented with the fires of concupiscence, resolved, in consequence, to destroy the source whence they proceeded. He first prepared himself for the emasculatory operation by experiments made upon different animals, and, when he thought himself sufficiently *au fait*, he eunuchised himself with a razor, bearing the operation with unexampled firmness.†

The wife of a labouring man, being extremely jealous, rendered his life extremely unhappy by her unjust suspicions. Coming home one day from his work, and being received by his spouse with her accustomed abuse and reviling, he became so infuriated thereat, that with one stroke of the sickle he held in his hand, he cut off all the parts she was so jealous of, and dashed them in her face.

The last case of this kind which we shall mention, is that of a young, handsome, and amorous Spaniard.

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* See the Journal de Médecine for the year 1758.

† *Ilib.*

This gentlemen having, after a long siege, succeeded in inducing his fair one to comply with his desires, found himself, when on the very threshold of bliss, wholly deprived of the erectile power. Overcome with shame and disappointment, he rushed from the apartment, and on reaching home, in a fit of rage and despair, amputated his treacherous member and sent it to his mistress as a bloody sacrifice for the expiation of his offence.

The wretched state of tantilization to which, notwithstanding their deprivation, these unfortunates are often exposed, has been thus forcibly depicted by Montesqieu in his celebrated "*Lettres Personnes.*"

"The Chief Eunuch to Ibbi at Erzeron.

"Thou followest thy ancient master in his travels. Thou passest through provinces and kingdoms. No chagrins can make any impression upon thee. Every moment presents thee with something new. Whatever thou seest diverts thee, and makes thy time pass away impercebtiply.

"'Tis not the same with me, who am shut up in a terrible prison, always surrounded with the same objects, and tormented with the same cares, under the weight of which, and of fifty years' annoyances, I am daily ready to sink. I can truly say, that in the whole course of a long life, I have not known one cheerful day, nor one moment's ease.

"When my first master determined to entrust his women to me, and induced me by a thousand promises, supported by as many threats, to part with myself forever, almost wearied out with painful service, I resolved to sacrifice my passions to my tranquility and fortune.

"Wretch that I was!

"I foresaw what I should not suffer, but not what I should. I flatter myself with the gain, but did not consider the loss. I hoped to be delivered from the assaults of love, by the incapability of satisfying it. Alas! the effect of the passions was destroyed in me, without extinguishing the cause; and very far from being relieved, I found myself surrounded with objects by which those passions were more and more irritated. I entered the harem, where all I saw excited my regret for the loss I had sustained; every minute offered new excitement to desire. Numberless charms seemed to present themselves before me, only to rive my heart with despair. To complete my misfortune, I had ever before my eyes the happy possessor of all these charms.

"Thus suffering, I have never conducted a lady to my master's bed, and assisted in undressing her, than I returned to my chamber, with my heart bursting with rage, envy, and despair. . . . . .

"I remember that, one day, as I was helping one of the ladies into the bath, I was excited to such a degree, that, losing all command over myself, I dared to place my hand upon the most formidable spot about a woman. Upon recovering myself, I made sure of that day's being the last of my life. I was fortunate enough, however, to escape with life, but the beauty who was at once the cause and witness of my weakness, made me pay dearly for her silence, for I entirely lost all authority over her, and the compliances she exacted from me, continually exposed me to a dreadful death."*

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* Persian Letters, translated from the French original by Baron Montaquen. Letter ix.

Eunuchs may be considered as either perfect or imperfect ones: the former are those whom the knife has deprived of every vestige of manhood, the penis itself as well as the testicles being amputated; the latter consist of such whose virile member is still left to them, but minus its appendages.

Eunuchs of this last kind are capable of coition, but, owing to the absence of testicles, cannot emit semen, and, consequently, possess not the power of begetting children.

The powers of these emasculated are, therefore, limited to the gratification of sensuality, impurity, and debauchery, and their defect of the generative faculty causes them to be particularly desired by lascivious women, since they can indulge themselves without any risk.

Young eunuchs, if they still retain their penis, are very capable of abusing women; they preserve a freshness of complexion, a soft skin, and an agreeable ebonpoint, which cause them to be objects sought after, even by men, in those burning climes where the too great facility of connexion with females diminishes the appetite for them.

By this sort of *liaison*, a *liaison* at once so criminal and so adverse to the great object of nature, it was that so many eunuchs obtained the highest and most confidential posts in the Asiatic courts. Alexander the Great had his *Bagoas;* Nero, his *Sporus;* and thus *Photin* under Mithridates, and *Eutropius** under Theodosius, governed the states of those princes.

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* The poet Claudian is very severe against this favourite minister of Arcadius, Emperor of the East, thus he says:

Martial, whose detestation of this *canaglia* was intense, omits no opportunity of lashing them with unsparing severity; witness his epigram upon Bæticus:—

"In Bæticum.

"Quid cum fæmineo tibi, Bætice Galle, barathro*
Hæc debet medios lambere lingua viros.
Abscissa est quare Samia tibi, mentula testa
Si tibi tam gratus, Bætice cunnus erat?
Castrandum caput est; nam sis licet inguine, Gallus
Sacra tamen Cybeles decipis, ore vir es."†

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"Omnia ceseerunt, Eunucho consule, monstra."
Cl. Claudiani in Entrop. Lib. i. v. 18

Let prodigies like these no more be told,
Since Consul, now, a eunuch we behold.

* Barathrum signifies a cave, but is here used as a euphemism for a woman's pudendum.

† To Bæticus.

Thou Bæticus, of Cybele, the priest!
And still art thou by female charms allured?
Thy tongue should pleasure give to men at least.
Was it for this the tortures you endured
By Samian were inflicted, when you lost
All that proclaimed the man; if still you seek
That cave when on Lust's ocean toss't.
Thy tongue, Bæticus, thy lips, thy cheek,
Thy head, must pay the penalty of Love.
Mart. Epigram. Lib. iii. ep. 81.

The eunuchs who are made so by compression, or by the distortion of the spermatic secretive organ, are not always, on that account, deprived of the generative power. Some of the vessels may have escaped the operation: thus oxen have been found capable of impregnating their females.

Suidas informs us that Pythias, the *chère amie* of Aristotle, was the daughter of a eunuch by compression.*

The eunuchs, therefore, who have been deprived of their testicles only, by amputation, are still susceptible of enjoyment in the part which is left them, and give symptoms of their irritability even more frequently than perfect men, although they cannot enjoy the pleasure of coition in its full perfection. They are also said to possess even an advantage over the uncastrated in being capable of a longer erection.

"Les eunuques," says Niebuhr,† "ne haissent pas le sexe, comme bien des gens le croyent, celui qui fit avec nous la route de Suez à Jambi avit plusieurs femmes esclaves destinées à ses plaisirs, une d'elles était traitée en grande dame. L'on me parla d'un riche Eunuque à Basre qui avait son Harem.

It must, however, be observed, that the penis grows but little after the amputation of the testicles, it being nearly the same size as before the operation; thus, a person emasculated at seven years old, has, upon reaching twenty, a genital organ not larger than that of a child, seven years of age; those, on the contrary, who have not been castrated until the age of puberty, are, as to size, similar to men of the same age.

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* Suidas, in voce.

† Description de l'Arabie.

Rainauld* relates many examples of an illicit connection between women and this mulitated gentry, and he also ridicules the confidence which many husbands have in them.

Andrea de Verdier is of the same opinion, which he supports by the following anecdote:—

"Apollonius Tiamœus had foretold to the King of Babylon that one of the eunuchs would abuse his bed, and while, the day after, he was in conversation with that prince, a screaming was heard from that quarter of the palace where the women and eunuchs resided. A eunuch had been caught in bed with one of the king's concubines. This eunuch they had seized, and were dragging by the hair of his head round the women's apartments, treating him like one of the royal slaves. Whereupon the chief of the eunuchs said, he had long perceived his attachment to this woman, and had given orders that he should not be suffered to dress her; and yet, notwithstanding this prohibition, he has been found in bed with her."†

Limited and confined, as eunuchs, in general, are in commerce with women, to mere sensuality and lasciviousness, being incapable of procreating, except as has been shown, under peculiar circumstances, they become better fitted for such pleasures. During the orgasm they are known to emit a small quantity of mucous secretion, which, probably, proceeds from the prostate gland.

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* De Eunuchis.

† Theophrastus de Apollon vitâ. Chap. xxxvii. Translated by Berwick.

Amurath III. is said to have been the first to introduce complete castration in Turkey, on the following occasion:—

Having witnessed the perfect covering of a mare by a gelded horse, he was so alarmed at the risk he ran of his women being abused by his eunuchs (who had lost their testicles only), that he no sooner returned to the palace than he ordered them all to have the penis also amputated.

St. Basil had like opinion of this description of eunuchs, for he assures us* that there is no trusting to the *completest* mutilation. He says that castration does not make him that was a male, become a female; he is still a male, just as an ox whose horns are cut off continues to be an ox, and does not become a horse.

He carries the comparison much further, observing that an ox, whose horns are cut off does not cease, when irritated, to make all the postures that he made before, and even to strike with that part of his head where the horns are placed.

"Eunuchs," continued he, "stripped close to the body, are not free from loose desires, for, though impotent in body, yet, in mind and inclinations, they wallow, like swine, eternally in the mire, and after abscission are more abandoned slaves to lust, who, free from discovery, glut their wild desires by wanton touches and loose embraces, not agreeably to their inclinations, but their power."

In opposition to the above opinion may be adduced that of Cyrano de Bergerac, an old French dramatist, who, in the following quaint lines in his play of "*Le Pédant joué*,"

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* *Lib. de vera virginitate. Subtine.*

maintains that castration can effectually cure the amorous passion:—

"J'entens que le diminutif
Qu'on fait de vrai, trop excessif
Sur votre flasque génitif
*Vous prohibe le conjonctif.*"

And he adds:—

"O visage; O portrait naif,
O souverain expédetif
*Pour guérir tout sexe lascif,*
D'amour naissant ou effectiff!
Genre neutre, genre métif
Qui n'êtes homme qu' abstractif
Grâce à votre copulatif
*Qu'a rendu fort imperfectif*
*Le cruel tranchant d'un canif.*"

One of the greatest qualifications in eunuchs employed as guardians of the harem is their supreme and disgusting ugliness, for which reason black eunuchs were most esteemed. These came from Africa, chiefly from Ethiopia, and were required to have the nose flat, the lips very large and very thick, and, above all, black and irregular teeth, widely apart from each other.

Complete eunuchs were extremely dear, on account of the great danger attending the operation, and the numbers who died in consequence of it.

Tavernire and Thevenot, travellers worthy of credit, affirm that scarcely one-fourth of those subjected to this kind of mutilation survive, the operation being performed upon negroes of from eight to ten years of age.

Besides these black eunuchs, there are others at Constantinople and Persia, who, for the most part, come from Golconda, Transgangetic India, Assam, Pegu, and Malabar, where the complexion is grey, and from the gulf of Bengal, where it is coloured.

There are also white eunuchs from Georgia and Circassia, these latter, however, are but few in number.

Tavernire says that when he was in the kingdom of Golconda, in the year 1675, not less than twenty-two thousand individuals were emasculated.

The complete amputation of the organs of generation is generally fatal if performed after fifteen years of age, and even at the most favourable period, viz., from seven to ten years of age, there is always considerable danger.

Chardin remarks that the total amputation is always accompanied with the most excruciating pains; that it is performed with tolerable success in young children, but that it is extremely dangerous after the age of fifteen years; that scarcely one-fourth part of those operated upon survive; and that the wound is not healed under six weeks.

Pietro delle Valle, on the contrary, asserts that those upon whom the operation has been performed in Persia as a punishment for theft and other crimes, are cured without difficulty, even when the parties are advanced in years, and that nothing is applied to the wound but cinders.

Castration is a law among some of the Hottentot tribes, the male individuals of which are deprived of one testicle, at

the age of puberty, it being believed that this privation renders them swifter runners. The circumstances attending the operation are so singular as to justify a short digression for the purpose of describing them.

After having well rubbed the youth with grease from the entrails of a sheep just killed for the occasion, he is laid upon his back his hands and feet are tied, and he is held down by three or four of his friends; then the priest, for the ceremony is a religious one, being provided with a very keen knife, makes an incision, removes the left testicle, replacing it by a ball of grease of the same size, which has been prepared with certain medicinal herbs; he afterwards sews up the wound with the bone of a small bird, which serves for a needle, his thread being the sinew of a sheep. The operation finished, the patient is untied, but ere the priest leaves him, he rubs him over with the grease, still warm, of the killed sheep, or, rather, pours it plentifully over his whole body, so that, when it cools, it forms a kind of crust; he rubs him so violently at the same time, that the youth, who has already suffered so much, sweats profusely and smokes like a roasted capon.

After this, the operator, with his nails, forms in this crust of lard, furrows from one extremity to the other, and then urines upon them as copiously as he can; he next recommences the rubbing process, covering the furrows, so filled with urine, with a fresh supply of grease.

Every one now leaves the patient to himself, who is compelled to crawl, more dead than alive, into a small hut built for the purpose, in which he either perishes or recovers his strength, without receiving the least assistance and without any other refreshment or food than the grease with which he is so

plentifully loaded, and which he may lick, without incurring any anathema; at the end of two days he is generally convalescent, and may then make his appearance in public, and usually proves his perfect cure by running a considerable distance as swiftly as he can.*

A state of eunuchism is not, however, produced only by such active means as above described; an excessive use of acids, the too frequent use of opium or narcotics in general, the habit of daily intoxication, and, lastly, the repression of all inclination to venereal indulgence by a long and severe observance of chastity, weaken and obliterate the sexual organs, render them impotent, and effect the indirect castration of the individual. The exhaustion consequent upon excessive indulgence in the venereal act, a disease so common in warm climates where men marry young, and when the sexual pleasure is so much abused, render the greater part of men little better than eunuchs, at the age of thirty. Leanness, marasmus, universal tremor of the limbs, loss of memory, derangement of the abdominal viscera, in short, the rapid decay of all the moral and physical faculties, are the fatal consequences of this excess of animal delight.

Nor are these effects to be wondered at, if it be true, as Warthon† observes, that every secretion of the seminal fluid is equivalent to twenty times the same quantity of blood; but Buffon makes it forty times.

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* De Glandul. p. 184.

† Mémoires de la Société Médicale de l'année 1779.

Although castration does not produce, universally, the same results as exhaustion, they are, however, analogous. The first distinctive trait of the eunuch is softness, paleness, placidity, a relaxed state of his cellular tissue; while, as with women, his glandulous and lymphatic system is much developed and very moist.

"Le développement de la graisse," observes Lory, "supposes toujours plus ou moins de relâchement et de faiblesse dans la constitution du corps. Les naimaux châtrés sont, en général, chargés de graisse, et spécifiquement plus légers que les animaux de la même espéce qui, n'ayant pas la même volume, sont, dependant, et plus denses et plus forts. Ces animaux sont, aussi, moins actifs et moins vifs que les autres. On sait que les excès dans les plàisirs de l'amour engraissent ceux qui y sont adonné, de même que les saignées multipliées ou les hémorrhagies qui vienent à la suite de grandes blessures."

The second trait is the absence of a beard and of the hair under the arm-pits and on the pubis, in persons who have been castrated before the age of puberty; the epoch at which these tokens of virility appear.

Animals, the males of which are distinguished by their horns, as the stag, or by combs, spurs, &c., as the cock, are always without these distinctive marks if they have been castrated before the production of them, but if they undergo the operation after the age of puberty, they may preserve those masculine characteristics.

Thus man, when castrated after the growth of the beard, preserves it, although it is less thick and bushy than under other circumstances. It has also been remarked, with respect

to eunuchs, that there is scarcely any interval between their youth and their decrepit old age.*

It follows, from this physical weakness, that eunuchs generally exhibit more plumpness and embonpoint than other individuals. The same is observed in oxen, sheep, and capons, when compared with bulls, rams, cocks, &c.

Individuals who are too fat, especially females, become unfitted for generation on account of the weakness accompanying obesity.

Charlevoix informs us that the Caraib cannibals are always careful to castrate their prisoners of war before they eat them, in order that their flesh may be fatter and more delicate.

It has been further remarked that the belly of a eunuch is soft and flabby, his thighs thick, and his legs swollen by the superabundant humidity descending to them. As their organs are easily distended they are rarely subject to hernia or rupture, and to the affections dependent upon the *strictum* of the solids: thus it is, according to Hippocrates, they are scarcely ever subject to gout. For the same reason instances have been known of maniacs being cured by castration, and dogs being subjected to this operation are never liable to hydrophobia.† In fact, mad persons experience, by the venereal orgasm, redoubled violence, and they are sometimes given to coition distinguished by a fury truly horrible; hydrophobia, at times, excites the most violent priapisms followed by continual emissions.

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* Gibbon, Decline and Fall. Chap. xxxii (note).

† Columella. De re rustica.

With regard to the estimation in which eunuchs have been held at different times, it has already been seen that they were not tolerated in Greece until after the emperors; so greatly indeed were they detested, that a Greek proverb says—

"If you have a eunuch slay him, if not, buy one for that purpose."

"Lucian informs us this hatred was so great that if a person accidentally met with one on his road, he instantly turned back, being sure that no good fortune would attend him that day.

Cæsar expressly says that castration was considered by the Romans as a worse punishment than even death itself.

Ammianus Marcellinus declares that he would not credit even Numa, Pompilius and Socrates, if they spoke well of eunuchs.

St. Basil gives their characters in these words:—

"Eunuchs are an abomination, void of every feeling of honour; they are creatures who, being neither male or female, are infuriated by the sexual desire. They are jealous, despicable, ferocious, suspicious, and insatiable. They abandon themselves to womanly tears even for the privation of a meal. The knife has rendered them chaste, but this forced chastity avails them not, their lasciviousness renders them furious and yet produces them no fruit."

The opinion of Chardin, who resided a considerable time in Persia, is, also, by no means favourable; he observes, that having no connection but with the master who purchased him, eunuchs are devoid of both tenderness and pity; but that, for this very reason, they have a most devoted attachment to their owner, and would do for him what another would for his wife,

his child, or his country, for their master is every thing to them. Chardin does not, consequently consider the fidelity of eunuchs, so highly praised by some writers, as deserving of so much commendation, but looks upon it merely as the natural consequence of their miserable condition.

Pliny asserts that animals have a similar aversion to such of their species as have been so mutilated, and observes that if a rat be castrated, all the others will prefer deserting their usual abode to suffering him to remain among them."

"By becoming a slave," observes Virey, "eunuchs contract all the vices of baseness. Their weakness renders them fearful, and consequently, gloomy and faithless; unable to effect any thing by strength, they have recourse to intrigue and flattery; incapable of fruitful labours, they are sordidly avaricious; unable to obtain glory, they fall back upon vanity; entrusted with the care of the women, they become their rivals in stratagem and intrigue. Thus the generality of eunuchs, while they affect a mild and gentle character, are vicious and malignant. Nothing proves so effectually as this does, how much genuine virtue depends upon strength."

Nor is the opinion of Cabanis more favourable—

"The ancients," he says, "believed that castration deteriorated a man, but, on the contrary, improved the animal. The truth is that both are equally degraded, since their nature is changed. But by rendering the animal weaker, he is made more docile and better fitted for the purposes of man, by breaking the chain which unites him more closely to his species, there becomes developed in him the most lively sentiments of gratitude and affection for the hand that feeds him."

The effect is the same in man; mutilation separates him, as

it were, from his species, and the divine flame of humanity is almost entirely extinguished in his heart, in consequence of the fatal act which rends assunder the dearest ties established by nature between beings of the same kind.

It is well known that eunuchs are, generally, the vilest class of human beings, cowardly and deceitful, because they are weak, envious, and malicious, because they are unhappy. Their intellects also are sensibly affected by the absence of those impressions which impart so much activity to the brain, which animate it with an extraordinary vitality, and which, cherishing in the soul every expanded and generous feeling, elevate and direct its every thought.

The following striking portrait of one of these unfortunates is given by M. Bedor:—

"He was a eunuch from his birth, and had been drawn for a soldier by the conscription. His manners were humble and effeminate; his eyes, either cast down or sunken in their sockets, seemed to fear supporting the look of others; far from being warlike he was timid, pusillanimous, and was afraid to look upon the dead, but, most of all dreaded darkness. By his own confession, he had never felt any attachment for any person, even in his own family; on the other hand, he was equally incapable of aversion or hatred. Music gave him no pleasure, and he had not the least idea of singing, in short, he was susceptible of no enjoyment whatever. He, however, never complained of his situation. His intelligence was very limited, his language confused and incorrect, and education took such little hold of him that, although he had lived a year in the barracks, he had contracted none of the habits of the soldier."

It cannot, however, be denied, notwithstanding the above

unfavourable portraits, that history furnishes numerous instances of eunuchs who have been distinguished by high mental endowments, an ample list of whom may be found in Zuinger. Among others, he mentions the three youths represented by the Prophet Daniel as having been preserved by a miracle, when ordered to be burnt to death by King Nebuchadnazer.

"To these," says our author, "may be added Bagoas, the eunuch of Holofernes, the same who introduced Judith into his sleeping tent; Hermias, a pupil of Aristotle,* and who wrote upon the immortality of the soul; Origen, who castrated himself; and Narses, who obtained such celebrity as a general under the Emperor Justinian. But the most illustrious, and, perhaps, the least known instance, is that of the Holy Evangelist St. John."

Ecclesiastical writers declare that such (a eunuch) was the Holy Evangelist St. John, whom Jesus loved beyond all his other disciples, who lay upon Jesus' bosom, who, while Peter tardily advanced, flew, borne on the wings of virginity, to the Lord, and who, penetrating into the secrets of the Divine Nativity, was emboldened to declare what preceding ages had been ignorant of.

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* Aristotle himself must have had a favourable opinion of the emasculated, since he says, in his 9th book upon natural history—"But all animals if castrated when young become larger and more elegant than those who are not so mutilated;" and Quintillian himself admits that castration improves the beauty of boys.—See Inst. Orat. Lib. v. c. 12.

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*

As regards also the assertion that the operation in question affects the mind, so much as to derpive it of all fortitude in the times of danger, there is great reason to doubt it, inasmuch as most of the generals of Eastern monarchs have been, at all times, of this class; and the bravest stand that ever was made against Alexander the Great was at Gaza, under the command of one of Darius's generals, who was a eunuch.

Eunuchs frequently held the highest dignities of the state at the Ottoman court. Two of the most celebrated pashas in the Turkish empire were such, the name of the one being Halis and that of the other Simon. Of the latter, De Thou relates the following anecdote:—

"A courier having brought him the unwelcome news of the town of Strigonia having been taken by the Christians in 1556, he only smiled and said that he himself had suffered a much severer loss when he had been deprived of the most important thing about him."

The theologians of the Romish church have discussed, at considerable length, the question of the validity of marriages contracted by eunuchs.

"Castrated persons," says Sanchez, "who have the genital member sound entire, are, notwithstanding the absence of one testicle, competent to marry, inasmuch as they can emit a perfect semen."

A single testicle suffices for effectually exercising the gene-

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* Raynaudi Opera. Vol. viii. p. 252.

rative faculty and for setting all the members in motion, precisely as a single eye suffices to enable a man to see; nay, sometimes, a single testicle serves, even better than two, for the seminal virtue which, in this case, would be divided, is concentrated in one, acquiring, for that very reason, greater power; so much so, indeed, that a monorchode is generally found much more vigorous than biorchodes. The difficulty, therefore, is to know if persons deficient in both testicles should be allowed to marry.

Many writers are of opinion that they may, provided their genital member be capable of erection, or they can introduce it into the generative receptacle, although they emit no semen therein, because the second object of marriage, that of gratifying the wife's desires, is accomplished; and as to the first object of marriage is that of the procreation of children, it is not indispensably necessary.

Aristotle tells us, in his history of animals, that testicles are not absolutely required for generation, but that they greatly contribute thereto, like the weight suspended to the weaver's loom, which prevents the run of the woof from being interrupted or stopped. This great philosopher supported his opinion by the example of an ox, which, notwithstanding its being castrated, if shortly afterwards, made to cover a cow, will impregnate her. Besides which, fishes and serpents engender without testicles. Hence, many learned theologians, relying upon these authorities, are of opinion that, provided the woman consent, eunuchs may marry.

But there are others who require something more than the woman's acquiescence for the validity of eunuchs' marriages, and this is, that they should be able to emit a kind of semen, although it be not effective for generation, inasmuch as such

an emission suffices in the matrimonial act, since barren persons never emit any kind of semen, and it may be observed that almost all castrated persons have that kind of secretion. As to the different opinions of theologians favourable to the marriage of the emasculated, Sanchez, ever guided by reason, concludes, notwithstanding the assertions of the above theologians, that all castrated persons deprived of both testicles, can never contract a legitimate marriage, and for this reason, because, in the conjugal act, it is necessary that the semen which is emitted into the vagina should be proper for generation.

Now, although some castrated persons have the power of erection, and sometimes emit an aqueous semen, nevertheless that semen can never become effective, it causes no action or movement in the principal organs of the body in consequence of the absence of testicles, which act as blows, setting in movement every member. For the heart, the liver, and the brain, which are the three principal organs, send their vital spirits to the testicles, which have the virtue of retaining them; in consequence of which, the whole body receives a genial warmth. But these spirits are lost when testicles are wanting, and the necessary heat is not dispersed over the body; and this is the principal reason why eunuchs are incapable of generation, as is proved by Galen and several other celebrated writers. It must, therefore, be established as an incontestable fact, that eunuchs are not competent to marry.

Pope Sextus V. expressly forbade the marriage of castrated persons. Writing to his Apostolic Nuncio, his Holiness says—

"We charge and expressly order your apostolic brethren to forbid every kind of marriage to eunuchs deprived of the two testicles. You must, in obedience to our order, declare them

incapable; forbid all priests to marry them; first causing to be separated those who may be already married, and declaring their marriage null and void."

The castration of males, for musical purposes, may be dated from the sixteenth century, for in 1569 the Elector of Bavaria's chapel, which was composed of ninety-two musicians, and was very celebrated, under the direction of Orlando de Lasso, could reckon among its singers six castratos, who were most probably Italians, as were, also, all those who, fifty years later, were distributed among the chapels of the different courts, for Italy was, at the commencement, the very centre of this disgraceful and cruel operation, and an innumerable multitude of these falsetto singers left that country and dispersed themselves through Europe.

Some writers even assure us that the practice may be traced still further back, and that it originated neither in the Papal states nor any other part of Italy. In fact, Balsamon of Constantinople, informs us in his commentary upon the Council of Trulles, that in his time, that is in the thirteenth century, castratos were employed as singers in the churches. Moreover, the history of the Roman church records the curious fact, never before quoted in any history of music, that in 1137 a castrato named Manuel, coming from Greece with two other singers, established himself at Smolensko as a musical teacher and director.

If to the above evidence be added that of Socrate, an ecclesiastical writer, who mentions a eunuch named Brison as being a teacher of hymn-singing, castrato-singing may with great probability be considered as having been introduced in the twelfth century.

From the church, the use of castratos passed to the thea-

tre so soon as the opera began to be developed. The admission of females on the stage being, at that time, prohibited; the female *dramatis personæ* were enacted by young boys; but this practice had many inconveniences. In the first place, such youths were incapable of giving the proper expression to the characters they represented, and, secondly, the change of voice consequent upon their arriving at virility, soon rendered them unfitted for their employment. The opera, therefore, was compelled to have recourse to the castratos,* and the celebrated Pietro della Patte informs us that, in his time, castratos were distributed throughout the lyrical theatres of Italy.

Thus in request, both in the church and the theatre, castratos became all the fashion. No well frequented chapel, no theatre of any importance, could dispense with employing voices which were the admiration of a people renowned as being the most musical in the world.

But besides these enthusiastic admirers of *la bella voce des castrati*, philantrophists were not wanting to reprove a practice so disgraceful to humanity, and, in consequence of their laudable exertions, castration was frequently prohibited, under

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* "Pray mama," said a young lady, who had been to the opera to hear the celebrated Veluti, "what is the difference between an Italian soprano and a man?"

"The difference, my dear, is—is—is the same as between a bull and an ox."

"And pray, mama, what is that?"

"Why, my love, the bull is the father of the calf, and the ox is his uncle."

"Oh!"

severe penalties, in the Papal states themselves. But the number of castratos, nevertheless, continued on the increase, a circumstance which may fairly be attributed to the inconsistency that while the operation was forbidden, the singers, who were the victims of it, were still admitted into the pontificial chapel. The prohibition, also, left a tolerably large *trou échappatoire* by excepting the cases in which surgeons considered the operation to be necessary, either on account of disease or accident.

The prospect of a brilliant career, and of amassing immense wealth, presented too many attractions for taking advantage of so easy a pretext. Parents, void of all feeling, hesitated not themselves, to deliver over their children to the knife of a mercenary operator, pleading poverty in excuse of their crime.

For a long time it had been erroneously supposed that Clement XIV. (the liberal and philosophical Ganganelli), abolished this inhuman practice through the Papal dominions, a mistake which arose from the following curious circumstance:—

Parini, a celebrated Italian writer, editor of the "Milan Gazette," was accustomed to place the articles as they came from his pen into a small box, whence they were taken by the printer, as he wanted them. His tailor, passing by the box, and being in want of papers for measures, perceived the manuscript, which he thought was thrown therein as waste paper. He therefore took and cut it up, heedless of its contents. Parini did not obsevre the circumstance until the Gazette was printing, and, not recollecting the contents of the page, had recourse to supplying its place by the following notice, entirely of his own invention, and which he dated from Rome:—

"The holy father (Ganganelli), in order to abolish, for ever, the crime of castration, unfortunately but too common in Italy, orders that, henceforth, no singer, who has been subjected to this infamous mutilation, shall be allowed to sing, either in the churches or in the theatres of the Roman states."

This supposed intelligence was repeated in the "Leyden Gazette," and by the French newspapers, so that the Pope received the compliments of the Protestants, Catholics, and, above all, of the *Philosophers*. This imaginary brief elicited two poetical epistles, of which the one ending thus:—

"Aimez un peu moins la musique
Et beaucoup plus l'humanité,"

was written by Charles Bordes, of Lyons, but attributed to Voltaire. The other one is as follows:—

"Epitre au Pope Clement XIV.
Sur l'ordre de SS. qui défend la castration.

Nous vantons notre philosophie
Mais que sert son triste flambeau;
Ses traits percent ils le bandeau
De notre antique barbarie?
Insensés et faibles mortels
N'avons nous pas, grâce un sophisme
Des esclaves du fanatisme
Et des guerres et des duels?
Cet âge d'or que je regrette,
Reviendra't'il? Je n'en sais rien;
Mais l'âme est un peu satisfaite

Quand on voit naitre quelque bien
Gloire et felicité parfaite
Au suprême et sage prélat
Qui ne vent point qu'un arriette
Coûte un citoyenà l'Etat.
Il se souvient qu 'à son image
Dieu jadis créa les humains:
Il conservera son ouvrage
Tel qu'il est sorti de ses mains
Cet acte seul l'immortalise
Le beau sexe le canonise,
Et des dames le noble cœur
Verra condamner, avec joie
Un genre de fausse monnoie
Qui blessait leur douce candeur,
Cette invention frénétique
Dût naitre au fond de l'Enfer.
Avouons que c'est payer cher
Un petit luxe de musique,
Et se sont des peuples pensans,
Des Chrétiens polis et charmans,
Qui dans le temple et sur la scène
Se donnaient ce doux passe temps
Aux dépens de l'espèce humaine?
Les descendans des Scipions
Des Fabius et des Catons
Subissaient l'attente impie
Malheureux dans leur infamie
Chaque jour souffrant mille morts
Et pour mieux combler leur misére
Forcés de peindre des transports

Qu'ils ne pouvaient plus satisfaire.
Remercions Clément l'Apôtre
Chez les Cordeliers il vivait;
Du bien qu' à l'homme on entourait
Il a su le prix mieux qu'un autre.
Pour le payer de sa bonté
Puissent des songes favourables
En dépit de Sa Sainteté
Lui retracer la volupté
Qu'il conserva à ses semblables.

It was not till the time of the occupation of Italy by the French that the severest measures were adopted and enforced against this evil; and since that time this disgraceful practice has been completely done away with. It must, however, be observed that, according to recent investigations, an attempt to resuscitate the practice has proved, to a certain degree, successful by the establishment of a school for singing called *Scuola, degli Orfanelli*, where are to be found many children and youths of different countries who have been deprived of their virility, either by *disease* or *accident*, and the superintendence of the schools is entrusted to a Roman castrato.

## ESSAY VI.

## ON HERMAPHRODISM.

THE word *hermaphrodism* means the union of the two sexes, personified by the names of *Hermes* (Mercury) and *Aphrodite* (Venus) in one and the same individual.

From the Mosaical account of the Creation, it would appear that the very first hermaphrodite was Adam,* the *reputed* father of the human race, and as such received the Divine command—

"Increase, multiply, and replenish the earth."

And that being thus created with the two sexes, he only gave

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* Genesis. Chap. i. v. 27 and 28.

up the female one, upon the creation of Eve, who was formed from one of his ribs.

Some learned rabbis asserted that Adam was created double that is with two bodies, one male and the other female, joined together by the shoulders; their heads, like those of Janus, looking in opposite directions; and that when God created Eve, he only divided such body into two.

Others maintained that Adam and Eve were, each of them, separately an hermaphrodite. Other Jewish authorities, among whom are Samuel, Manasseh, and Ben-Israel, are of opinion that God did not form Adam an hermaphrodite, but that our great progenitor was created with two bodies joined together by their sides, and that he separated them afterwards, during Adam's sleep; an opinion founded by these writers upon the second chapter of Genesis, verse 11, the literal translation of the Hebrew text being—

"*He* (God) *separated the woman from his side and substituted flesh in her place.*"

This idea resembles that of Plato, as will be seen further on.

There is yet another difficulty, upon which Catholic divines hold different opinions. In Genesis, chap. i., v. 27, 28, it is said, "male and female created He them, and God blessed them and said, '*Be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth.*'"

Whence it clearly appears, say those divines, that God created a woman with man *before* Adam was placed in the terrestrial paradise, and yet, in the following chapter, it is said that *after* God had so placed Adam in Paradise, He caused a

deep sleep to fall upon him, and then, taking a rib out of his side made it into a woman; an account which appears impossible to be in any way reconciled with the one given in the preceding chapter, inasmuch as in the former the woman is represented as having been made on the sixth day, and in the latter, on the seventh.

Origen, St. Chrysostome, and St. Thomas believed that the woman was not created till the seventh day; but the most generally received opinion is that Adam and Eve were created on the sixth.

In order to avoid the difficulty presented by these different readings, many rabbis assert that, in the beginning, God created two women, one of whom was named Lilas and the other Eve; the first being created simultaneously with Adam, and, like him, of the dust of the ground, while the other was fashioned from one of his ribs.

According, therefore, to this opinion, all the apparent contradictions arising from the different readings are removed; the first woman, Lilas, having been created on the sixth day, and the second one, Eve, on the Seventh.

Very little being known of this Lilas, some account of what the Jews think about her may not prove uninteresting. This we learn from the celebrated Baxtorf, in the following passage, which contains the whole history of this first wife of Adam, that she, having disobeyed him, divorced herself from him, and endeavoured to destroy their son as soon as born.

"When," says Baxtorf, "a Jewess becomes pregnant, and the time of her delivery is at hand, a decently furnished room is prepared for her, in which is placed whatever she may require. First of all, the father of the family, or, as his substitute, some

other Jew known for his piety and rectitude, having taken a piece of chalk, draws a circle with it round the room, and writes upon all the walls of the room, both within and without, upon the door and the bed, in Hebrew characters, the following words, '*Adam, chava, chutz Lila;*' that is to say, 'Adams' Eve, avaunt thou Lilas;' The signification of these words being, if the woman is pregnant with a boy—'May God give him a wife like unto Eve, and not resembling Lilas! if she is pregnant with a girl, may that girl serve as a help-mate to her husband as Eve was to her husband, and not disobediently to and quarrelsome with him, as Lilas was with Adam!'"

As to the history of this Lilas, it was as follows:—

In the beignning, God having created Adam in Paradise, said—"It is not good for man to be alone." He, therefore, formed, with the dust of the earth, a woman like unto himself, and to whom he gave the name of Lilas. But scarcely had she been so formed, than strife broke out between her and Adam, and they began to quarrel.

According to the Greek mythologists, Mercury having rendered some services to Venus, the goddess fell in love with him, and bore him an hermaphrodite, a child which united the talents of his father with the graces of his mother:

> "From both the illustrious authors of his race
> The child was named; nor was it hard to trace
> Both the bright parents through the infant's face."

At the age of fifteen he began to travel, and bathing one

day in a fountain in Cana, excited the passion of Salmacis, its tutelary nymph; but continuing deaf to all the offers and entreaties of the latter, she, throwing her arms around him, entreated the gods to render her inseparable from him whom she adored. The gods heard her prayer, and formed of the two a being of perfect beauty, preserving the characteristics of both sexes.

The Greek artists exercised their talents in the production of a kind of beauty mixed of that of the two sexes, and time has spared some of the masterpieces; such is the figure known under the name of the *hermaphrodite*. A cruel operation formed this beauty by depriving young men of the appendages of virility. That which art could only effect by a privation, nature executes by superaddition.

Plato's ideas upon the subject of *hermaphrodism*, are too curious to be omitted.

"In the beginning," says he, "there were three kinds of men, not only the two which still exist, namely, the male and female, but a third, who was composed of the two first, and of whom nothing now remains but the name. The Androgynes, for so they were called, had not only both the male and female faces, but also the *pudenda* of both. Of these, likewise, nothing now exists but the name, which is considered *infamous*. All the males of these three different kind were of a round form; they had four arms, four legs, two faces, turned one towards the other, placed upon only one neck, four ears, and two genital parts. They walked upright, but when wishing to move very fast they rolled head over heels, like tumblers.

"The reason for the different shape of these three kinds, was, that the males were formed by the sun, the females by the

earth, and the mixed race of Androgynes by the moon, which partakes both of the sun and the earth. They were of a spherical figure, because they resembled those whence they derived their origin, namely, the sun, the earth, and the moon.

"Being robust, bold, and enterprising, they resolved to make war upon the gods, and, like the giants mentioned by Homer, to scale heaven itself. On which account, Jupiter and the other gods took council together as to what should be done, it being a matter of no little importance, for they knew not how to crush these rebels. If they destroyed them with thunderbolts, as they had done the giants, the worship of the gods would perish by the annihilation of the human race. On the other hand, it was impossible for the gods to suffer such audacity. After much reflection, Jupiter spake and said—

"'I have discovered how to allow men to exist, and, at the same time, abate their pride and presumption. They must be made weaker. I shall, therefore, divide them into two portions and thus they will lose half their strength, while by the increase of their numbers, that of our worshippers will be multiplied. Henceforward, therefore, they will go upon two legs; should they still continue to be rebellious, I shall divide them a second time, so that they will then go upon one leg only, as if lame, their onward motion being that of hopping.'

"Having thus said, Jupiter divided men into two, as hard eggs or a hair are cut in twain; and having so done, ordered Apollo to turn the face round towards the part which had been cut off, in order that each man having been made sensible of the separation he had undergone, might become less audacious.

"Jupiter, likewise, ordered that the wounds caused by the division should be healed. Apollo obeyed these directions, and, after turning the face, he caused the skin to be drawn over the wound, fastening it in the place where the navel is now situated.

"Thus, then, Jupiter and all the celestials were secured against the assaults of our so punished ancestors, who were divided and reduced to the miserable state in which we their descendants now are. But as the best things have their inconveniences, so there arose from the separation a very great one wholly unforseen by Jupiter. When two divided portions happened to meet each other, they embraced with such ardour that they could not again separate. Touched with pity at this new misfortune of men, Jupiter, with a sagacity exclusively his own, ordered that the parts of generation should, henceforth, be placed in front, instead of as before, behind, and attached to the buttocks, whereby the act of generation was rendered impossible, the seed being let fall upon the earth, as is the case with storks. The genital parts, therefore, having been placed in front, it was Jupiter's will that generation should be effected by the junction of the male and female, in order that when a man united himself to a woman, the result might be the propagation of the human race."

Plato then proceeds to account for the love which some men have for some women, and *vice versa*, as also for the inclination which some women have for other women, and *vice versa*.

"The males," he says, "which are halves of an androgyne, are much given to women, and the women, which are the halves of an androgyne, are passionately fond of men. As for the women who indulge an inclination for others of their own sex, they are the halves of the androgyne females who were

doubled, and the men who exhibit a liking for other men, are the halves of the males who were also doubled."

The opinion that Adam and Eve were, each of them, hermaphrodites, was received in the thirteenth century by Amaury de Chartres, who also held that, at the end of the world, both sexes shall be reunited in the same person; for which and other opinions he was condemned as heretical by Pope Innocent III.

Eugubinus was also of opinion that Adam was an hermaphrodite, and asserted that the two individuals adhered together by the sides, and that they resembled each other in every respect, save the sex. The male body was on the right, and embraced the other by the neck with his left hand, while the other did the like to him with the right hand, presenting (as it should seem) a similar appearance to that of the Siamese twins, who were exhibited publicly in London some years ago.

Antoinette Bourignon, a celebrated French visionary, who was born at Lille, 13th January, 1616, says, in her work called "The New Heaven and New Earth"*—

"Men think to have been created by God as they are at present, although it is not true, seeing that sin has disfigured the work of God in them, and instead of men, as they ought to be, they are become monsters in nature, divided the two imperfect sexes, unable to produce their like alone, as trees and

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* He came into the world so very deformed, that a consultation was held in the family for some days about stifling him as a monstrous birth. But if he sunk beneath humanity in his exterior, his interior seems to have been raised as much above it.

plants do, which, in that point, have more perfection than men and women, who are incapable of producing by themselves, and need conjunction with each other, and whose parturition is accompanied with pain and misery."

The celebrated William Law, also author of the "Call to a Holy Life," believed that the first human being was a creature containing both sexes in its own perfect nature.

Mirabeau took nearly the same view of the subject, maintaining that the first man must have been a perfect hermaphrodite, a most accomplished egoist, with ample powers for producing a posterity. In support of this paradox, this philosopher quoted the texts—

"God created man in his own image, male and female created he them." "Increase and multiply, and replenish the earth."

This command, he observes, was given on the sixth day, and Eve was not created until the seventh; hence Eve must have been born of Adam, or separated from him. Admitting, moreover, that the term day, as used in Genesis, is employed to express an indefinite period of time.

Thus in order to form women, God deprived Adam of his androgyne character, and reduced him to a being having one sex only. Hence the irresistible inclination which draws one sex towards the other by the active tendency which the halves have to become united, and hence also that inconstancy and fickleness so common in human nature, each half encountering a thousand difficulties in finding its real counterpart.

Hermaphrodism, considered physiologically, is a disposition of parts, more or less real, more or less complete; and is found in a certain class of animals, and still oftener in numerous plants.

In man, and other classes of animals, whose organization approaches the nearest to perfection, this disposition is always abnormal, never offering a character sufficiently decided for hermaphrodism, in the strict sense of the word, to be predicated of them. It is with hermaphrodism as with all other monstrosities; it being, oftentimes, nothing more than the persistence of one of the transitory phases of the fœtal organization. As the genital apparatus is composed of a determinate number of parts, which is the same both in the male and female, and which correspond to each other, so there exists between those organs a relation, by virtue of which, each of the sexual parts of the male possesses its analogy in one of the sexual parts of the female, a change, or a mere modification only, may be operated in the developement of those parts; hence hermaphrodism *with* or *without* excess; *without excess*, if the development is only modified or different in the sex to which those parts belong; *with excess*, if there is an augmentation of the normal number of the parts, by the addition of male organs to the corresponding female ones, and *vice versa*, reciprocally.

A careful examination of the cases of hermaphrodism which have appeared in our days has constantly exhibited vices of conformation, the appearance of which might easily deceive superficial or prejudicial observers. The subjects in question belonged exclusively to one of the two sexes, some of them presented even, nothing, as far as regarded the genital apparatus, than an imperfect organization.

Formerly, the existence of true hermaphrodites was not doubted. In Winrick (de ortu monst. c. 20), Riolan (De Hermaphr. c. 8), and Shenkius (Obs. Med. 373), we read of a maid-servant who, in 1461, was condemned to be burried alive for having got her master's daughter with child. Montems

declares that he knew an hermaphrodite, supposed to be a female, who had brought her husband several children, and was in the habit also of intriguing with females.

The existence of such a being as an hermaphrodite, either in the human species or, indeed, in any of the superior classes of warm-blooded animals, has been, not only questioned, but confidently denied by many medical men of the present age.

Among others, M. Virey observes, that in the superior class of warm-blooded animals, in birds with one oviduct, and the mammifera, a real hermaphrodite has never been possible, for the co-exsitence of ovaria and testicles (the one being the representative of the other) implies contradiction; they cannot be simultaneous. Many instances have, indeed, been reported of females having the male attributes, or of imperfect males preserving many of the exterior characteristics of females. But it is impossible for masculine women (viraagines) to present an extraordinary development of certain parts, by which they acquire virile habits: a gruff voice, a species of beard and masculine features, in the same way as some young boys of weak constitution having no scrotum, nor the testicles descending clear of the inguinal ring, imitate, by their timid manners and effeminate features, the character of girls; they are without beard, and their breasts becomes plump; they are, however, void of the real uterus, the penis is scarcely perceptible, and their sexual desires either do not exist at all, or are very feeble.

It is a curious fact that at an early period of existence, the sex of no living animal can be distinctly recognized. Some physiologists even affirm that there is no reason to believe that the organization is such as to admit the evolution of the parts of the embryo distinguishing male and female, and that this evolution takes place during some period of gestation.

Sir Everard Home considers the ovum, previous to impregnation, to have no distinction of sex, but to be so formed as to be equally fitted to become a male or female fœtus.

M. Ferrein observes, that if to constitute an hermaphrodite wherein the sexes are combined, it is necessary to have the distinctive characters of the male united to the female parts, there never was any woman who has not been a male during several months of her existence. In the earlier stages of pregnancy that distinctive organ is prominent and fashioned, very nearly, after the manner of males, so that the unskilful in anatomy may suppose the embryo a male though really a female.

To the above respectable opinions may be opposed three cases from which it would appear to prove that when a communication exists between the seminal vessels and the uterus, the individual can fecundate himself without the co-operation of another one. Suppose, in fact, that a dream should excite a veneral orgasm during the night, and bring into play, in the one part, the testicles, and, on the other, the ovary, the spermatic fluid might, through the uterus, proceed to vivify the germ, and the latter would then go through, in the usual way, its series of developments.

The cases above alluded to are the following:—

The *Bulletin de la Faculté de Médicine de Paris*, Tom. iv. p. 185, states that a man was living at Lisbon in 1807 who, in addition to two testicles, with a penis capable of erection and perforated with a canal one-third of its length, had also the organs of the female sex, like those of a well-formed woman. His features were masculine, and he had a slight beard, but his voice and inclinations were similar to those of a woman, and he had, also, his menses regularly.

This hermaphrodite was twice pregnant, but miscarried on both occasions, the first time at the third month, and the second at the fifth month.

The portfolio of the ancient Academy of Surgery of Paris contains the drawing of a similar case, and one in which the examination was more complete—

It was that of a person named Jean Dupin, who died at the Hotel Dieu in 1734, aged 18 years, and who had, on one side a penis, a testicle, and a seminal vesicle, and, on the other, a small oval matrix, an ovary, and a tube. The siminal vesicle communicated with the matrix.

Lastly, may be seen at the Musée de la Faculté de Paris, a wax model representing an analogous case to the preceding one, the passages of the fecundating fluid also bordering on the uterus.

The French anatomists who have more particularly investigated this subject have defined the several varieties of this *lusus naturæ* that have hitherto been known to occur in the human subject.

According to them there is a vice in the formation of the parts intended by nature for the propagation of the species, when, besides those concealed parts which are necessary for the discharge of the prolific functions, the pudenda of the other sex also appear.

This monstrous production of nature is diversified in four different ways, of which three appear in males, and one in females. In men, the female pudenda, clothed with hair, sometimes appear contiguous to the periteneum; at others, in the middle of the scrotum; while at others, and which constitutes the third diversity, through that part itself which, in the middle of the scrotum exhibits the form of a male pudendum, urine is

emitted, as it were, from female parts. Near that which is the test of puberty, and above the pudendum in females, the masculine genitals appear conspicuous, in all their three forms, one resembling the penis, the other like the two testicles, but, for the most part, it happens that of the two instruments of generation one is feeble and inert, and it is extremely rare that both are found sufficiently vigorous for the feat of love; nay, even in a great many cases, both these members are deformed and impotent, so that they do not perform the functions either of a male or a female.

Among the medical writers of our own country, Dr. Drake, in his work upon anatomy,* observes that the extraordinary size and laxness of the clitoris hanging out of the body, in some infants, had made the women mistake such children for hermaphrodites. On one occasion he had brought to him a child about three years of age, whose clitoris hung out of the body so far that it very much resembled a penis; but it wanted the perforation, instead of which the urine issued from a hole just behind it, which hole was nothing else than the corner of the *rima*, the clitoris filling all the rest of the orifice, so that the parents mistook the child for a boy, christened it as such, and esteemed it as such, when they exhibited it to the doctor.

It is certain that in some women, especially those who are very amorously inclined, the clitoris is so vastly extended that by hanging out of the passage it is mistaken for a penis, such have been called *fricatrices tribades*, and *subigutrices*, and accounted hermaphrodites, because they are able to per-

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* Drake's Treatise upon Anatomy.

form to a certain degree, with other women the actions of men.

"In ogni età," says an Italian physiologist, "si sono trovate donne, formite dalla natura di grossa o sproporizonata clitoride, o divenute tali per la detestabile vizlo descritto dall' Appostolo Santo nella prima epistola *ad Romanos* abusandose elleno di tal membro diedero motivo agl' imperito di essere reputate ermafrodite."*

Dr. Parsons, the author of a work, the express object of which was to show that the notion of hermaphrodism was a vulgar error, coincides in opinion with Dr. Drake, and considers all the subjects of this description as women whose clitoris, from some causes or other, exceeds the regular size.

If all that is reported of hermaphrodites were sufficiently attested, they might be divided into three classes, viz. :—

1. Individuals having a perfect sex, of which they can successfully avail themselves, together with the other sex imperfect.

2. Individuals possessing somewhat of both sexes, but who are imperfect as to both.

3. Individuals having both sexes sufficiently perfect as to produce, either as male or female, without, however, being able to produce of themselves alone, that is, independently of another male or female.

1*st Class of Hermaphrodites.* There are many instances of human individuals who, having one sex sufficiently decided and

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* Della regolata e viziosa generazione degli animali. Napoli 1755.

well formed for them to employ it with effect in the sexual congress, have the other only very imperfectly developed.*

This kind of hermaphrodites may be of two sorts, males or females; males, when the masculine sex is predominant, and females, when the feminine sex is perfect.

This is, perhaps, the first step of nature towards hermaphrodism; it commences by uniting to a perfect sex an imperfect development of the other one. Roman laws take cognizance of these imperfect hermaphrodites, and decide that they must be considered as belonging to the sex which predominates in them.† In the most ancient times they were treated as outcasts, or were even considered as unworthy to live.‡

The naturalists who had an opportunity of observing several of these conformations have endeavoured to discover the cause, but have always failed, and ever will fail, for the origin of sex is involved in impenetrable mystery.

*2nd Class of Hermaphrodites.* The individuals belonging to this class, far from possessing the two sexes, have, in reality, neither the one nor the other. They have something of each, but in so imperfect a degree that they could not copulate, either as male or female. These barren beings, to whom nature has been too liberal, and yet not liberal enough, being incapable of the act of love, either actively or passively, are a mixture of the two sexes, in which the one mutually destroys the other. These, however, may be considered as necesasry links in the universal chain of being, nor is it improbable that these

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* Considérations Philosophiques.

† Plin. Hist. Nat. Lib. vii. cap. iii.

‡ Lib. x. ad Dorg.—*de statua hominum.*

attempts of nature will arrive at perfection after some generations.

"We have seen," says the celebrated French naturalist Robinet, "that nature has produced a perfect hermaphodite in some species of animals, and we observe her making continual efforts to produce the same phenomenon in the human race, and her essay to the end, although as yet imperfect, and falling short of her purpose, promise us something better in the future."

In these hermaphrodites, the penis is, in general, imperforated at the extremity, so that, although the individual may be capable of erection, no emission of semen can take place.

Such was the hermaphrodite, an account of which is given in the Mémoire de l'Académie des Sciences à Paris, and who was examined by M. Moraud; such, also, was the one seen at Amsterdam in 1764.

Of similar conformation was, likewise, the individual whose marriage was declared null by the Parliament of Paris on the 10th January, 1760.

In all these subjects, the *vulva* was a small hole between the penis and the anus, and into which the little finger might be introduced with difficulty, and which had no exterior appearance of the organ except when the flesh was pressed up on both sides, in order to form the *labia*. Their breasts were not larger than men's are in general; their skin was rather delicate, and their voice like that of a eunuch. Neither of them was subject to periodical evacuations, nor felt any emotions in the presence of women; their predominant inclination being for men.

Some hermaphrodites of this class have been seen with scarcely any hair even on the *pudenda*, and others, who had

hairy legs and a beard, like a man, but all had a delicately turned neck, and no hair on the breast.

*3rd Class of Hermaphrodites.* A celebrated physician relates the case of a man who had married a female hermaphrodite by whom he had several children, male and female, and that the individual so considered a woman had frequent connexion with the maid servants, and had, even, gotten them with child.*

Here, then, was an hermaphrodite of the third class, who had both sexes, and who could copulate either as a man or a woman.

It is said that at Surat in India, there are many hermaphrodites of this description who, dressing, in all other respects like women, wear a turban in order to make known that they possess the two sexes.

Were this fact well authenticated the work of nature would be much more advanced than we dare to believe, in our present want of sufficient testimony.

Generally speaking, hermaphrodites unite the qualities of the male and female organization, but they possess them imperfectly, because they are themselves *imperfect* hermaphrodites. When nature shall have succeeded in uniting, in the same individual, the perfect organs of both sexes, these new beings will advantageously combine the beauty of Venus with that of Apollo, which is, perhaps, the highest degree of human beauty.

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* Shenck, Observ.

The following cases are subjoined in illustration of the preceding observations:—

M. Veay, a physician who practiced at Thoulouse, thus describes an hermaphrodite in 1686:*

"A very singular circumstance occurred to me a few days ago, in the female ward of the Hospital of St. Jacques; a servant girl, who was an hermaphrodite, was brought to me as a patient. She is the native of a place named Pourdiac, about seven leagues from Thoulouse, and was baptized as a girl, under the name of Margaret. Her father is a poor working man of Pourdiac, named Melause. She is from 21 to 22 years of age, and, to all outward appearance, is a girl, although posssesing the real token of a vigorous man. Her face is feminine, and rather agreeable; her neck is very pretty, and her breasts as well formed as can be desired in any girl; her hips and thighs as large as in the case with women; the pudenda precisely like those of a woman, but the slit is not longer than two fingers' breadth, and from the middle of it protrudes a virile member of a very considerable thickness, and which, when in a state of erection, comes out about eight inches. This member is well formed, except that it has no prepuce, and is unaccompanied with apparent testicles. The urine and the semen issue from it as in men, and what is very extraordinary, the menstrual evacuation is also discharged from the same place. I should have had great difficulty in believing this had I not seen it myself,

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* Phil. Trans. abridged. Vol. iii. p. 356.

having examined the party very particularly at the time of the mense, which she had almost regularly every month, two months very seldom elapsing without their appearance, but they were almost always accompanied with great pains and tension of the abdomen, indicating a kind of inflammation in those parts. I showed my patient to several of my professional brethren, and after having consulted the Vicars General, we caused Margaret to assume a man's dress, and to take the name of Arnaud Malause, and he will shortly be taught some trade by which he may obtain a livelihood.

"There was no room for hesitation, because our hermaphrodite could perform, extremely well, the functions of a man, and not at all those of a woman."

Casper Bauchinus, a celebrated German physician, relates the following case of hermaphrodism:—

"A farmer who had in his family a maid-servant, about 23 years of age, observed a very suspicious familiarity between her and his wife. Having at length determined to satisfy himself upon the subject, he applied to the judicial authorities, who committed the examination of the party to M. Baut and another physician of the name of Plat, whose description of the hermaphrodite was, that she was tall and thin, having a masculine voice, a head of long hair, but only a few soft hairs upon the chin (for he used to pluck his beard with tweezers as fast as it grew), had no breasts, but was hairy about the pubis, and had a long penis, the prepuce being drawn back and well worn; under this penis, in the peritoneum, where the operation of lithotomy is commonly performed, there was a kind of chink, about half a finger's joint deep, from all of which appearances we judged him to be a man rather than a woman.

"Being asked respecting his amorous exploits, he confessed

to having had connection with several women of the town, the act being accompanied by the usual emission of semen and great pleasure, and, further, that whenever he had to do with any female, or even had an erection of the penis, his testicles swelled in his right groin, which he perceived to be there by the touch, but that on the left side nothing was perceptible, either during coition or otherwise, nor did anything flow from the aforesaid *rima* or chink.

The above mentioned physician also gives an account of a child who was baptized a male, and brought up as a tailor, but who afterwards entered the army, served as a soldier in Hungary and Flanders, married a wife and lived seven years with her. At the end of that time, he, one night arose from his wife, complaining of a violent pain in the abdomen, and in half an hour afterwards was delivered of a daughter.

Upon this extraordinary circumstance becoming public, the magistrates instituted an enquiry; an examination of the individual took place, and the poor female soldier confessed herself to be of both sexes, and that a Spaniard had cohabited with her, once only, in Flanders, by whom she proved with child; that she had never been able to perform the sexual act with her wife during the seven years they had lived together, but that the latter had concealed this her impotency.

## LAWS CONCERNING HERMAPHRODITES.

Most nations have enacted laws against these unfortunates. The Jewish code is particularly explicit respecting them, as are, likewise, the civil and canon ones.

Eutropius informs us* that at an early period of the Roman history children of this description were ordered to be shut up in a chest and thrown into the sea.

We are indebted to Casper Bauchinus for the following very curious account of the restriction imposed upon them by the Jewish as well as by the civil and canon law:—†

"Frequent mention is made of hermaphrodites in the Jewish law, although but little enquiry was made respecting the cause of this mixed conformation. The word androgyne‡ was very familiar with the Jews, who understood it to signify the having the parts of generation of both sexes, one of which, however, they allowed to be more fully developed and more vigorous than the other. Hence arose some disputes among them concerning the laws which some individuals should be subject to, and which are to be found in the Talmud, as follows:—

"Androgynes are in their natures to be considered partly as men and partly as neither man nor woman, but such as they appear in their proper persons.

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* Hist. Rom. Lib. ii. chap. 3.

† De Hermaphroditibus.

‡ Man-woman.

"I. They are like men in five respects, according to the law of the Book of Moses:—

"(*a.*) By polluting whatsoever man or thing which they touch or which touches them, whensoever they have emitted their semen; as men pollute every thing in such cases, as declared by the law;

"(*b.*) By being obliged to marry their brothers' widows, not having children, as men are;

"(*c.*) By being obliged to be dressed from head to foot, after the fashion of men, and to shave their heads, as men;

"(*d.*) By being permitted to marry women, as other men do, and not to marry men;

"(*e.*) By being obliged to observe all the precepts of the Mosaic law, as Jewish men, but not as women, who are not subject to it all, because of those things which their different seasons require. (Secundum ea quæ tempora requirunt).

"II. They are further likened to women in seven respects, according to the law of Moses:—

"(*a.*) By polluting every man and all things which they shall touch, or are touched by at the time of their menstruation;

"(*b.*) Because it is not lawful for them to converse with man alone, or in any private place;

"(*c.*) Because they may shave their heads in a circular manner as women; and besides, may spread out their beards, which the law of Moses forbids men to do;

"(*d.*) Because they are permitted to walk among the dead, as women, which is forbidden to men;

"(*e.*) Because they cannot bear witness, as women cannot;

"(*f.*) Because as women, they are forbidden all unlawful copulation;

"(*g.*) Because, as women, it is lawful for them to marry a priest of the seed of Aaron, whereby they are vitiated.

"III. They are to be esteemed as men and women in six respects:—

"(*a.*) Because, if assaulted by any person, compensation is to be made, as the law directs, for the injury so inflicted, provided it be fully attested;

"(*b.*) Because if killed by chance merely, the person so killing them shall take refuge in one of the privileged places in sanctuaries ordered for security in such cases, there to remain until the death of the high priest, precisely in the same manner as if the said party had killed a man or a woman, but should the hermaphrodite be wilfully murdered, the murderer should die as if he had murdered a man or a woman;

"(*c.*) Because, whenever a woman brings forth an androgyne, she ought to be accounted *unclean* during seven days, as for a male child, that is, the days of uncleanliness and purification ought to be numbered as for the bringing forth of a son or a daughter according to the law of Moses;

"(*d.*) An androgyne, if of a sacerdotal race, is a partaker of sacrifies like other men that are so, according to the law of Moses;

"(*e.*) They have their share both of paternal and maternal inheritances, and also in such other inheritances as they may obtain by law as a man or a woman;

"(*f.*) When an androgyne has a desire to withdraw from all worldly affairs, such wish must be complied with."

## OF THE CIVIL AND THE CANON LAWS REGARDING HERMAPHRODITES.

The mode in which hermaphrodites are regarded by the canon and the civil law may be gathered from the following questions and answers:—

Q. I. Should an hermaphrodite, upon being baptized, receive the name of a man or a woman?

A. If there should appear to be more of the male than of the female conformation, the person should receive the man's name; otherwise, that of a female; but should the fact be doubtful, it lies at the discretion of the person who names the child.

Q. II. How often should an hermaphrodite confess?

A. Like a man or a woman, twice a week.

Q. III. Can an hermaphrodite contract marriage?

A. Yes; and whether the person contracts a marriage with a man or a woman must be determined by the predominancy of either sex in himself, but if both sexes appear equally developed in him the choice is left to the hermaphrodite.

Q. IV. Are hermaphrodites comprehended in the status requiring the consent of friends upon contracting marriage with women?

A. The statute does not contemplate persons having both sexes.

Q. V. Can an hermaphrodite be a witness?

A. No; except in cases where a woman may.

Q. VI. Can an hermaphrodite be witness to a will?

A. No; this will be determined by the sex which predominates, thus, if the male sex be more developed, he may; but if the sexes be equal, or the female predominate, he may not.

Q. VII. Whether an hermaphrodite should be party in a lawsuit as man or woman?

A. An oath must first be taken as to which sex predominates, and the question will be decided accordingly; but if both sexes are equally developed the party is incapacitated, according to the decision of the Holy Church.

Q. VIII. Can an hermaphrodite enter into Holy Orders?

A. An hermaphrodite is excluded therefrom on account of deformity or monstrosity; but if the male sex predominate, the character may be conferred, but not ordination nor a power of administering the sacraments.

Q. IX. Can an hermaphrodite be a judge?

A. An hermaphrodite is considered as among the infamous to whom the gates of dignity ought not to be open.

Q. X. Can an hermaphrodite be an advocate?

A. No; being infamous.

Q. XI. Can an hermaphrodite succeed in copyholds?

A. In the affirmative, if there be more of the male than of the female in the conformation.

NOTE.—Others answer that though the male sex predominate, by the appearance of the pudenda, yet, if the parts seem, in other respects, such as strength, agility, &c., to be equal to men, they may succeed in such inheritance. Others assert that the laws granting feuds to the descending males do not include hermaphrodites.

Coke upon Littleton mentions a law against this—

"Every heir is either a male, a female, or an hermaphrodite, that is, both male and female, and every hermaphrodite which is also called androgyne, shall be heir, either as a male or female, according to that kind of sex which shall prevail."

Some jurisconsults are of opinion that since this monstrous exhibition of nature is not such as to abrogate the rights or

destroy the character of humanity among human beings; this involuntary misfortune implies no right to deprive those upon whom it is inflicted by nature, of the privileges common to every citizen, and as this deficiency is no more infectious than any other corporeal mutilation, it is not easy to see why marriage should be prohibited to one of these unhappy beings, merely on account of its equivocal appearance, which acts in the character of its prevailing sex.

If such a creature, by the defect of its construction, should be barren this does not infer any right of dissolving the marriage which it may have contracted, more than the same sterility proceeding from any other cause, known or unknown, provided the persons joined in matrimony with such an individual should not, on this account, require a divorce. It is only the licentious abuse of either of its sexes that can render such an individual amenable to the laws.

Before concluding the present Essay, some account must be given of an individual, the doubts concerning whose sex created as intense a curiosity as his talents, acquirements, and accomplishments excited universal admiration. This individual was the Chevalier d'Eon.

The Chevalier was born under the paternal roof on the 5th of October, in the year 1728. His father was Louis d'Eon de Beaumont, director or administator of the royal domains, parliamentary advocate, &c., &c., his mother being a French lady of *Charanson.*

No secrecy obscured his birth; no mystery shrouded it; the doctor, the midwife, the nurse, the relations and friends, both male and female, were all present at the solemn hour of parturition.

The child was baptized two days after at the parish church of Notre Dame de Tonnerre, as appears from the following document:—

EXTRACT FROM THE REGISTER OF THE PARISH CHURCH OF NOTRE DAME DE TONNERRE

On the 7th of October, 1728, was baptized Charles Geneviève André Timothéo Louis Augustus, son of the noble Louis d'Eon, administrator of the royal domain, and his wife, a French lady of Charason, by lawful marriage, which son was born on the 5th of the present month. The godfather, M. Charles Regnard, parliamentary advocate, bailiff of Cusy; the godmother, Mademoiselle Geneviève d'Eon, wife of M. Maison, wine merchant, of Paris, who have signed.

Signed { G. D'Eon Maison. / Regnard. / Bores, Dean of Tonnerre.

At the usual age, the young chevalier was sent to an elementary school, whence, after some time, during which, he acquired the rudiments of learning, he was transferred, under the care of one of his uncles, to Paris, there to prosecute his studies. Naturally fond of literature, he read with avidity the great poets, historians, and orators of antiquity.

The first products of his pen were *L'éloge funèbre de la Duchesse de Penthiève, de la Maisson d' Este* and that *du Comte d'ons en Bray.*

But while thus occupied with literary pursuits, he evinced a strong passion for the military profession, and took lessons in the noble art of fencing, and attained a proficiency therein which was subsequently of great advantage to him.

Talents so striking soon attracted the attention of the court and the government, and, upon a difference having arisen between France and Russia, he was recommended to the King Loius XV. to act as coadjutor with the Chevalier Douglas for arranging amicably, if possible, the dispute between the two courts.

The complete success which crowned this, the first essay of his diplomatic abilities, soon procured him several successive appointments of the same description at several foreign courts, such as Vienna, Warsaw, London, &c., but to enter into the details of which would exceed the limits of our Essay.

The chevalier d'Eon having gained for himself so distinguished a name as a diplomatist, was now anxious to acquire some degree of military renown. Accordingly, in the war between France and Germany, having joined this regiment, the colonelcy of which had been bestowed upon him by the king, he distinguished himself equally for courage as for military tactics at Meinstoff, Heinbeck, Osterwich, and at Ultrop, at which battle he was wounded in the head and the thigh.

In 1762, the Duke de Nevernois was appointed ambassador and plenipotentiary for negotiating a treaty of peace between

France and England, having the Chevalier d'Eon for secretary to the embassy.

Owing to the scandalous intrigues got up against him in Paris, the Chevalier suffered such a reverse of fortune that he lost his titles and his fortune, and thus isolated, not to say proscribed, he passed fourteen years in London.

The leisure thus afforded him, he devoted entirely to study. Throughout the winter he remained shut up in his library, working there fifteen hours out of the four-and-twenty, and receiving visitors, except on Sundays, between the hours of ten in the morning and two in the afternoon. He took a frugal repast, the only one during the four-and-twenty hours; this finished, he again entered his library. He retired to rest very late, and rose frequently during the night to note down the thoughts that occurred to him.

In 1775, the Chevalier doffed his male attire, and donned that of the opposite sex, a change for which he himself never assigned any cause.

A French novelist, however, has endeavoured to account for it by the jealousy of George III., who, he states, but without adducing any proof of his assertion, had his suspicions of too great an intimacy existing between the Queen and the Chevalier, and upon the latter declaring it was impossible, as his real sex was the female one, immediately and peremptorily insisted upon his assuming the dress belonging to his sex.

During the Chevalier's residence in London, many reports were bruited about which gave cause for doubting the real nature of his sex, and hence two parties were formed, the one maintaining that the Chevalier was really what he appeared to be by his dress, that is, a man, while the other declared him to be of the opposite one.

It would almost appear incredible, but it is actually a fact, that the amount of the bets made abroad was not less than £80,000 sterling, and in England £200,000. Had the Chevalier chosen he might have cleared an immense sum, either by becoming himself, secretly, a better, of not less than 25,000 louis d'or, by consenting to verify his sex; but, far from seizing on so favorable an opportunity of enriching himself, he was shocked at the indecency of the proposal made to him, openly insisted upon the bets being declared null and void, protested against the verdict delivered in their favour on a first trial, and before his leaving London had declared through the newspapers that as the fate of the betters could not be determined otherwise than by that which they (the betters) had no control over, it could not be expected that he would degrade himself by throwing any light upon the subject of the wager, inasmuch, as by so doing, would be to fail in self-respect, and be unworthy of the dignity of the official character with which he had been invested by his sovereign.

Such was the cause of the lawsuit, which, after lasting a considerable time, was at length terminated to the Chevalier's satisfaction by a definite judgment pronounced on the 31st of January, 1778, by Lord Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, the said judgment declaring as null and void all the bets which a former judgment had declared to be legal.

The Chevalier, during his stay in London, met, as might have been expected, with many curious adventures, of which the following was one:—

In one of his nocturnal rambles, as he was passing through a dark and lonely street, his ears were assailed by cries, uttered by a female voice, of

"*Au secours! au secours!*"

Without a moment's hesitation, he hastened to the spot whence the sound proceeded, and there found stretched upon the ground a female, while two ruffians were beating her most unmercifully. Immediately, and before the assailants could turn round, he had felled to the ground, with a stout cudgel, the one nearest to him, and the other, taking to his heels, made his escape.

The Chevalier next proceeded to assist the lady to rise; she, was suffering most dreadfully, so much so, that she was almost incapable of thanking her deliverer, who, offering her his arm, which she accepted, escorted her home. *Chemin faisant*, the lady enquired to whom she was indebted for her deliverance, and was very surprised upon learning that it was the Chevalier d'Eon, but the latter's astonishment was still much greater when he found that it was the Duchess du Barri whom he had saved from being murdered. Four days after, the Duchess, most imprudently, set off for Paris, where, upon her arrival, she was denounced to the revolutionary tribunal, and perished on the scaffold.

The Chevalier d'Eon did not long survive the Countess Du Barri, as he died in London on the 21st of May, 1810. Measures were immediately taken to remove the mystery which had so long been attached to the sex of the deceased. The inspection of the corpse was made by the celebrated Mr. Copland, an eminent surgeon of that day. The official report he made upon the occasion was as follows:—

"I certify, by these presents, that I have examined and dis-

sected the body of the Chevalier d'Eon, in the presence of the following gentlemen, viz. :—

Mr. Adair, Mr. Wilson, and the Rev. Father Elyse, and that I have found the male organs of generation perfectly sound in every respect."

Several persons of distinction, who had been acquainted with the deceased, were also present, among whom was Sir Sidney Smith, R.N., &c.

## ESSAY VII.

## ON DEATH.

Men fear death as children fear to go in the dark, and as that natural fear in children is increased with tales, so is the other.—Lord Bacon.

THAT priests and physiologists should differ, *toto cælo* as to death, its origin, nature, as well as the cause of its introduction into *this best of all possible worlds*, cannot appear surprising if the entirely opposite character of the education, surroundings, and associations of the former class, from those of the latter one, be duly and impartially considered.

From such an investigation it will appear that priests regarding whatever dogmas found in the Scriptures to be of divine, and, consequently, of infallible authority, not only yield, an implicit assent and obedience thereto themselves, but exact the same from their respective flocks.

In the present day, however, those, and their name is *legion*, who consider it their right, as well as their duty, to en-

deavour to satisfy themsevles, so far as they may be able, of the truth of any proposition they are called upon to believe, having exercised that right and performed that duty, have found that the dogma of St. Paul, viz.—

"By sin first came death into the world,"*

is based upon verses of the 2nd chapter of Genesis.†

This was, there can be no doubt, the dogma which originated the idea so general among mankind, that death was a punishment consequent upon transgression.

Now, the word *death* admits of two meanings—first, a *spiritual* or *metaphysical* death; and, secondly, a natural or physical one; but, if a spiritual death be the one meant, the Divinity himself must have been the creator of sin, inasmuch as He alone could have called into existence a sentient being who was to commit it, and suffer the punishment awarded it, a conclusion as awful as it is legitimate, and of which the whole responsibility rests upon the writer of the Book of Genesis, whoever he may have been,‡ or upon the Apostle Paul himself.

Again, the idea of transgression naturally introduces that of suffering. Now, an acquaintance with nature exhibits dissolution not less in harmony with the laws of nature than those of life itself.

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* For the wages of sin is death. Romans, chap. ii. v. 2, 3.

† But of the tree of Knowledge, of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat for on the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. Genesis, chap. ii. v. 6, 7.

‡ On this point see the work of Bishop Colenso.

The same universality of functions which give hope, vigour, and restless curiosity in the season of youth, reigns equally over the hour of decease, and composing all the feelings in numbness and confusion, fits the mind no less than the body for the impending process. Death, thus divested of its adventitious notions of force and infliction, enters among the common functions of our being, and if not viewed with indifference, may be expected with resignation.

The slightest acquaintance with ecclesiastical history will suffice to show, first, that the philosophy of the priesthood is—that man is born, not to enjoy life; but to prepare for death, although the priests themselves are a living refutation of their own maxim, inasmuch as they monopolise more of the means of enjoying life and its comforts than does any other order of men. Second. That priests have, in all ages, been notoriously unscrupulous as to the means they have employed for maintaining and increasing not only the power, but also the *secular* interests of their respective churches; one of those means being that of describing, in the most awful and harrowing terms, the death-bed agonies of *unbelievers*, more especially of those who had employed their intellectual powers in exposing, for the benefit of society at large, the real character of priest-craft, as well as the many serious evils with which it afflicts mankind.

This kind of posthumous slander and persecution was more particularly practised in England during the eighteenth century when the philosophical writings of Voltaire, D'Alembert, Rousseau, and Diderot, in France, and of Paine, Hume, and Gibbon, in England, produced so decided a reaction upon the minds of reflecting men upon the subject of Revelation.

About this time, a religious periodical, rejoicing in the name

of *The Christian Advocate*, made itself conspicuous by concocting and propagating such tales as those above alluded to, tales or rather falsehoods, which have been proved by irrefragable evidence to have had not the slightest foundation in truth. And first as regards Mr. Thomas Paine, author of *The Age of Reason*, and *The Rights of Man*, Dr. Marley (Paine's medical attendant), states that he paid Paine a visit expressly for the purpose of ascertaining the exact state of his mind. After asking him several questions about his belief, without receiving any answer, he endeavoured to qualify the subject by saying—

"Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?"

He answered—

"I have no wish to believe on the subject."

These were the last words, according to Dr. Marley, that Paine uttered. He died on the 8th June, 1809, and it is said, by one of his biographers, Cheetham (who was also his greatest enemy), "that he died placidly and almost without a struggle."

Mr. Morton, of New York, one of Paine's executors, visited him at Rochette, where he resided in 1804-5, being anxious to set at rest the foul calumnies propagated against his friend.

"Mr. Paine," he says, "never broached the subject first, but, to inquisitive and intrusive visitors, his general answer was to this effect:—

"'My opinions are before the world, and all have had an opportunity to refute them, if they can. I believe them unanswerable truths, and that I have done great service to mankind by boldly putting them forth. I do not wish to say more upon the subject now; I have laboured disinterestedly in the cause of truth.'"

In the preface to the second part of *The Age of Reason* Paine writes:—

"I was seized with a fever, that in its progress *had every symptom of becoming mortal* and from the effects of which I am not recovered. It was then that I remembered, with renewed satisfaction, and congratulated myself most sincerely, on having written the former part of *The Age of Reason. I had then but little expectation of surviving*, and those about me had less. I know, therefore, by experience, the conscientious trial of my own principles."

Next, then, as to the death of the witty, the acute, the philosophic Voltaire. The following particulars concerning his death are taken from that able work of Sir Charles Morgan, entitled *Philosophy of Morals.* Sir Charles says:—

"*The Christian Advocate*, having revived the absurd and inconclusive tale of the death-bed of Voltaire, I being at Paris, availed myself of the opportunity to procure the testimony of the only persons now living who were actually present on the occasion. The following documents are decisive upon the subject; and as the witnesses are far advanced in life, it is important that their testimony should be made known.

"Of these documents, for there are several, the present one is an extract of a letter from Dr. Beard, who, as an assistant physician, was constantly about the person of Voltaire in his last moments. It commences—

"'I feel happy in being able, while paying homage to truth, to destroy the effect of the mendacious stories which have been told respecting the last moments of M. de Voltaire. I was, by office, one of those who were appointed to watch the whole progress of his illness with M. M. Tronchin, Larry, and Try, his

medical attendants. I never left him for an instant during his last moments, and I can certify that we invariably observed in him the same strength of character, though his disease was necessarily attended with horrible pain. [Here follows the details of his case.] We positively forbade him to speak in order to prevent the increase of a spitting of blood with which he was attacked; still he continued to communicate with us by means of small cards. If he was not satisfied, he always notified to us his observations. He was, therefore, perfectly sensible to the very last moment, and, consequently, all the absurd stories circulated are deserving of the utmost contempt. It cannot even be said that such and such a person had mentioned this or that circumstance concerning his death, as having been present at it, for at the end everybody was forbidden to enter the room, and those who came to make enquiries respecting the moribund remained in the saloon and the other apartments adjoining.

"'(Signed), BEARD.'"

"This statement of Mr. Beard was confirmed to me in all its particulars by Madame de Villette, Voltaire's adopted daughter, who was likewise about his person during his last moments.

"(Signed), C. MORGAN."

Lord Brougham, in his Memoir of Voltaire, is obliged reluctantly to admit "on what proved his (Voltaire's) real death-bed that the Curé came and insisted on a full confession. When the dying man had gone a certain length he was required to subscribe to the doctrine of our Saviour's divinity. This roused his indignation, and he gave vent to it in an exclamation which at once

put to flight all the doubts of the pious, and reconciled the infidels to their patriarch."

The exclamation referred to by his lordship was the following:—

The Curé began by questioning Voltaire "If he believed in the divinity of Jesus Christ;" but was hastily stopped by the wit's saying—

"Ah! Monsieur le Curé, if I pass that article to you, you will demand if I do not also believe in the Holy Ghost, and so on until you finish by the Bull Unigenitus."

Upon the Curé putting his hand on the dying man's head as he lay in bed, Voltaire raised his own hand to the curate's head and pushed him away, saying—

"I came into the world without a bonnet, and I will go out without one! therefore, let me die in peace."

As a proof that even the priesthood of France believed he died "unconverted" he was denied the rights of Christian burial, having to be interred with great privacy at the Abbey of *Sellieres*, of which his own nephew was abbot. The bishop of the diocese dispatched a positive prohibition, but it did not arrive till the day after the decease had taken place.

From the following interesting account of the death of Jean Jacques Rousseau, we are indebted to the *British Cyclopædia*, article Rousseau.

"But a few minutes before his death, he uttered to his wife these his last words:—

"Be so good as to open the windows that I may have the pleasure of seeing, once more, the verdure of the fields. How beautiful it is! How pure the air! How serene the sky! What grandeur and magnificence the aspect of nature! Look at the sun's smiling aspect, it seems to call me hence! This is my

God—God himself, who opens to me the bosom of his paternal goodness, and invites me to taste and to enjoy that eternal tranquility which I have so long panted after."

Soon after uttering this noble exclamation, he calmly quitted the stage of human existence. So much then for the awful death-bed of this extraordinary man.

Of the last moments of David Hume, the celebrated historian and moral philosopher, we find ample particulars in a *Sequel to his Autobiography*.

In that work there is a letter written by Dr. Adam Smith, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, addressed to William Strahan, Esq., giving an account of the last moments of Hume. In this letter he gives a copy of one which he received from Dr. Black, Hume's physician and friend, the day after Hume expired. It is as follows:—

"Edinburgh,
"August 26, 1776.

"Dear Sir,

Yesterday, about four o'clock in the afternoon, Mr. Hume expired. The near approach of his death became evident in the night between Thursday and Friday, when his disease became excessive, and so weakened him that he could no longer rise out of his bed. He continued to the last perfectly sensible, and free from much pain or feeling of distress. He never dropped the slightest expression of impatience, but when he had occasion to speak to the people about him, always did it with affection and tenderness. I thought it improper to write to bring you over, especially as I had heard that he had dictated a letter to you desiring you not to come. When he became very weak, it cost him an effort to speak

and he died in such a happy composure of mind that nothing could exceed it."

Dr. Adam Smith, in his letter, passes the highest eulogium upon the character of Mr. Hume, both as a philosopher and a man, and more especially upon his firm yet mild conduct which he exhibited during the whole of his illness. He concludes in these memorable words which have been the source of much chagrin to the orthodox and bigoted:—

"Upon the whole, I have always considered him, both in his lifetime and since his death, as approaching as nearly to the idea of a perfectly wise and virtuous man as perhaps the nature of human frailty will admit."

We now come to the death-bed of Edward Gibbon, one of the brightest luminaries that this country has produced. Gibbon, in his immortal work *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, passed some very severe but just censures on the origin and rise of the Christian religion.

For this crime he had the honour of being placed among the class of Infidels, and, of course, being such, his death-bed was as awful as that of the rest.

Let us see. The only authentic particulars which we can obtain are to be found in the Sequel to his Autobiography, written by Lord Sheffield, his most intimate and confidential friend. His lordship says—

"To the last he preserved his senses, and when he could no longer speak, his servant having asked him a question, he made a sign to him to hint that he understood him. He was quite tranquil, and did not stir; his eyes half open. About a

quarter of an hour before one had ceased to breath. The *valet de chambre* said that his master did not, at any time, evince the least sign of alarm or apprehension of pain; and it does not appear that he ever thought himself in danger, unless his desire to speak to Mr. Darell (one of his friends) may be considered in that light."

The above statements, satisfactory as they are, will be still more so when it is considered how many instances are upon record of persons who, being in full health, have died from the mere apprehension of a visit from the King of Terrors. The following are a few.

It was once common for those persons who perished from violence to summon their destroyers to appear within a stated time at the tribunal of God, and there are many well attested instances in which, from the united influence of fear and remorse, the perpetrators withered under the curse and died.

Pestilence itself does not kill with the rapidity of terror.

The profligate Abbess of a convent, Princess Gonzaga, of Cleves, and the no less abandoned Archbishop of Rheims, took it into their heads to visit, for the sake of a joke, one of the nuns, by night, and exhort her, as a person visibly dying; while in the performance of their heartless scheme, they whispered to each other, but loud enough for her to hear—

"She is just departing!"

And so, indeed, she was, for her strength of mind, instead of detecting the trick, sank under the fright, and the profane and cruel pair discovered, in the midst of their sport, that they were making merry with a corpse.

In 1762, a French gentleman, who had been condemned to death for treason, was handed over to a physician, who, to try

the effect of the imagination told him he was to be dispatched by bleeding. Covering his face with a cloth, he then pricked him in the arm with a needle, instead of a lancet, placed his feet in a bath as if to encourage the flow of blood; conversing, at the same time, upon the fatal symptoms which began to manifest themselves.

The unfortunate man sank under the terror excited by the experiment, so that, upon the veil being removed, he was found to be a corpse.

Montaigne tells of a man, who was pardoned on the scaffold, and was found to have expired while awaiting the fatal stroke.

Cardinal Richelieu, in the hope of extracting a confession from the Chevalier de Jais, had brought him to the block, and, although he comported himself with the greatest courage and cheerfulness, yet an instant or two after he had laid down his head, and his pardon was announced to him, he was found in a state of stupefacation, which lasted several moments. In spite of his apparent indifference to death, there was an anxiety in the pause when he was momentarily expecting the axe to descend, which had so nearly proved fatal.

As to the second meaning of the word—Death—viz., that is, a physical not a metaphysical one, it naturally suggests the question—is death an evil? In reply it may be said that, as affecting individuals under peculiar circumstances, it is most undoubtedly one, but, as a general law, it must, if duly and calmly considered, be regarded as a benefit; for as to life its pleasures are far less numerous than the inconveniences, disappointments, and miseries by which it is surrounded: one tranquil and quiet day being counterbalanced by thirty or forty ones which afflict us with pain and grief. In fact, it appears

that we were not born to be happy, and that if youth is allowed to enjoy some few and transient pleasures, usurious Nature repays herself for the boon by the miseries inseparable from old age.

Did our limits permit, innumerable instances might be quoted from ancient and modern authors, proving that death is not, as is generally supposed, the dreadful being in Gorgon terrors dressed, and acting as the inflicter of divine punishments, but the minister appointed by a beneficent Deity, to open wide to suffering mortals the gates of eternal rest.

What says Horace* upon this point?

> "A thousand ills the aged world surround,
> Anxious in search of wealth, and when 'tis found
> Fearful to use what they with fear possess;
> While doubt and dread, their faculties depress;
> Fond of delay, they trust in hope no more:
> Listless and fearful of th' approaching hour;
> Morose, complaining, and with tedious praise,
> Talking the manners of their youthful days.
> Severe to censure, earnest to advise,
> And with old saws, the present race chastise."

Juvenal, the prince of Satirists, and who was as remarkable for the vigour of his style as for the fearless severity with which he denounced the disgusting vices of ancient Rome, says,

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* Horace, Ars. Poetica, line 169-175. Dr. Francis's trans.

when speaking in his tenth satire of what should be the objects of men's prayers, says—

"If men are to pray, let them pray the Gods for a sound mind in a sound body, for a courageous spirit, proof against the terrors of death, and which can include among the *gifts* of nature the expiring embers of their frail existence."

Shakespeare by no means encourages man to hope for a protracted old age, when he says—

"Last scene of all that ends this strange eventful history is *second childishness and mere oblivian: sans eyes, sans teeth, sans taste, sans everything.*"

Swift, following in the steps of Horace, describes, but with a much more vigorous pen, the inconvenences, annoyances, and miseries of a too far advanced age. He makes his hero, Mr. Gulliver, visit the island of Laputa, in which he finds the *Strudlbrugs*, a race of immortals who pass a perpetual life under all the usual disadvantages which old age brings alone with it. When they have completed the term of 80 years, they are looked upon as dead in law, and are held to be incapable of any employment of trust and profit, and their heirs immediately succeed to their estates.

At 90 they lose their teeth and hair; at that age they lose all distinction of taste, eating and drinking whatever they can get without appetite or relish. In talking they forget the commonest appellations of things and the names of persons, even their nearest relations and dearest friends; for the same reason they can never amuse themselves with reading, because their memory will not serve to carry them from the beginning of a sentence to the end.

Taking a similar view, Dr. Young, in his "Night Thoughts," thus expresses himself:—

> "Live ever here, Lorenzo, shocking thought—
> So shocking, they who wish, disown it too;
> Disown from shame what they from folly crave,
> For what live ever here? To bid each wretched day
> The former mock? To surfeit on the same
> And yawn our joys? Or thank a misery
> For change, though sad? To see what we have seen?
> Hear, till unheard, the same old slabber'd tale?
> To taste the tasted, and at each return
> Less tasteful? To quaff th' intoxicating draught,
> Trembling, each gulf, lest death should snatch the bowl?"

The above lines, however, must be taken, *cum grano salis*, for Young is well known to have been a *disappointed* man in his unhappy marriage, the want of preferment, and the loss of his favourite daughter.

Let us now proceed to say somewhat concerning the physiologists.

These gentlemen have never had any faith, since the days of Lord Bacon; with them the authority of a *name* is reckoned as nothing; the crucible supersedes Aristotle, the *Novum Organum* has increased the number of elements from four to fifty-two.

Of how many men, once so celebrated in the annals of science, may it be truly predicted that there exists naught but a mere *nominis umbra*. Were even the great Sir Isaac to

return to the scene of his former philosophical victories, he would find his theory of light totally exploded; that of colours, a mere blank; and even his system of gravitation disputed. As to chemistry, innumerable systems have been as evanescent and volatile as the very gases which were the subject of enquiry and experiment.

The science of anatomy has, within the last few years, been greatly improved by the successful labours of several eminent professors at the schools at Berlin, Bologna, Paris, and London; and with respect to the subject under consideration, that of death, it appears from experiments that in the more perfect animals there are three clsases of functions, viz., the sensorial, the nervous, the muscular, which, having no direct dependence, are yet, through their organs, dependent on each other, for the destruction of any one of these classes of functions, more or less immediately destroys the organs of all. The sensorial functions constitute the sensitive system, that by which we perceive and act, and, consequently, are connected with the world which surrounds us, the nervous and muscular, the vital system, that by which we are maintained.

It appears from experiment, that what is called *death* consists in the loss of the first of these classes of functions, that is, the sensorial, the nervous, the muscular system, still continuing, which are lost in consequence of the failure of respiration, the only vital function to which the co-operation of the sensorial power is necessary.

When the animal no longer feels and wills, his breathing ceases, and he is, according to the common acceptation of the word, dead, although his body still retains its other powers, which, while they last, prevent its obeying the laws of inanimate nature; but the changes which afterwards take place, of course

no more affect the individual than if they took place in any other mass of matter.

The natural death of the individual is the death of old age, and is the simplest form of death.

It will be found that the state which immediately precedes this must, consequently, be considered as its cause, must, in the nature of things, differ from sleep in no other respect, than in the less vigorous state of the functions of both systems, and, consequently, that these states are identical.

It also appears from the nature of our constitutions, that the last feelings in a *natural* death are necessraily of the same nature as those which precede sleep.

It is only when the course of our decay is disturbed that suffering of any kind attends it. Dr. Cullen, when dying, faintly articulated to one of his intimates—

"I wish I had the power of speaking or writing that I might describe to you how pleasant a thing it is to die."

Dr. Samuel Johnson also, who, in his last illness suffered much, being recommended the use of opiates, refused, saying, "No, no; no opiates, for I must enter my Creator's presence with an unclouded mind."

Why, it may here be asked, should we fear death, if we have no reasonable apprehension of its consequences? Why dread this single moment which has been preceded by an infinity of others of the same order, since death is fully as natural as life?

If we enquire of physicians and others who are accustomed to observe the actions and feelings of the dying, we shall find that, except in a few acute diseases, attended with convulsions the *appearance* only of pain is exhibited.

Even when patients appear to be afflicted with the most

dreadful agonies, they have no exitsence but in the imagination of the bystanders. The truth of this has been frequently attested by many persons who have recovered after the most violent convulsions, who, notwithstanding, were unable to recollect a single pang they had felt, or a single idea that had occurred to them during this seemingly distressful situation.

The greatest part of mankind, therefore, die without being sensible of the fatal stroke, and of those who preserve their senses to the last groan, there is not, perhaps, one who does not entertain some hope of recovery.

Men never cease to flatter themselves with hopes of recovery, even though they might judge of their real condition from the example of those who had been afflicted with the same incurable disease, and from the tears and distress of his relatives and friends.

Death, therefore, is not that horrible object which we have fancied to ourselves. It is a spectre which terrifies us at a distance, but disappears on our nearer approach. Our conceptions are founded upon prejudice, and we regard it not only as the greatest of all misfortunes, but as accompanied with the most excruciating tortures.

Eminent physicians have proved that death being always preceded by the depression of the nervous system, life likewise must ever terminate without feeling, that is "'ere life, sensation fails."

While apprehension is vivid, while a scream of pain can be uttered death is still remote. Organic disease or a mortal blow may end existence with a sudden pang, but, in the majority of cases, we pass out of life as unconsciously as we entered it.

To the well informed, death in its gradualness and harmlessness is what Homer called it, "the half-brother of sleep;"

and the wise expect it, and if they have no reason to welcome it, bear it like any other calamity. Were we not from childhood the victims of superstition, we should always regard death thus, but the priests make death the means whereby they whip the imagination into submission to the most degrading doctrines, for men know no independence, and are completely at the mercy of every strong impression, while they fear to die.

In the human being, moral and intellectual motives constantly operate in enhancing the fear of death, which, without these motives in a reasoning being, would probably become null, and the love of life be lost upon every slight occasion of pain or disgust.

It was a saying of the ancients, that if life were the mother of death, the latter, in its turn, begat and cherished life, which is to say, all metaphor apart, that matter is incessantly in motion and underwent continual changes.

There is no death for nature, and her youth is eternal, as are also her activity and fecundity; but although incessant life, development, and movement, she advances not. She changes for ever and ever, and rests not a moment. Quietude is inconceivable to her, and she has laid her curse upon rest.

Death is an idea relative to animals and vegetables, and those fugitive forms shone on successively by the rays of life, and it is those uninterrupted transmutations that constitute the order and degree of the individual.

There can be no doubt that death, in itself, has nothing terrible to a reflecting mind; all that can render it painful is the separation, for ever, from faithful and beloved friends, a separation, in fact, which constitutes real death. As to the cessation of existence in itself, it can only alarm either weak or timid minds incapable of forming a just appreciation of what

they are about to enter upon, or those guilty souls which the regret of having ill employed their past time, so far as their happiness was concerned, and the avenging terrors of a doubtful future; but for a well ordered, for a pure conscience, but the termination of life, it is the evening of a beautiful day. Upon this point Plutarch says:—

"As there can be no good experienced in a state of insensibility or non-existence, so there can be no evil; and as good and evil can only pertain to those who exist, so they can have nothing to do with those who have ceased to exist; they that are dead, therefore, are placed in the same state as that in which they were before their death."

As a consideration of the numerous instances in which death has been resorted to as the lesser of two evils must greatly tend to deprive it of its terrors, the following observations may not be deemed devoid of interest.

It has been remarked in several countries that the warm days of summer have brought with them many suicides in Andalusia, in London, Rouen, and Copenhagen, especially in the months of June and July; but the west winds, when the sky is heavy, damp, and cloudy, render the spirits gloomy, causing an uneasiness in the system, suppressing perspiration, and thus constitute autumn as the principal time for suicides in England and elsewhere. Cold and damp years, as well as times of dearth, political commotions, &c., increase the causes of suicides. It may, however, be presumed that there exists a predisposition to this act of madness, as well in families presenting hereditary symptoms of it, as in constitutions of an atrabilarious temperament, or in consequence of some organic affections of the viscera.

Thus the most susceptible and most intelligent of beings,

is, for that very reason, he who can rid himself of life by a voluntary act of that corporeal covering, of that "mortal coil" which keeps the animal imprisoned within the limits of his organism. Man is still free, since his death is in his own power.

"The Deity," says Pliny, "cannot commit suicide, a power however, which he has vouchsafed to grant to man as a remedy for the manifold evils of life."

Even death itself may be said to have its facetiæ. Noteworthy men have often amused themselves by writing their own epitaphs, generally attempting to be jocular upon one of the few things that make wise men serious.

Thus, Pope, affecting an indifference to praise and blame he was far from feeling, wrote—

"Here lies one who ne'er cared, nor still cares, not a pin,
What they said, or may say, of the mortal within;
But who, living and dying, serene still and free,
Trusts in God, that as well as he is he shall be."

But the poet, we may be sure, had not the slightest idea of the lines he perpetrated appearing on his tombstone.

Shakespeare is supposed to have dictated the blessing, threatening quatrain that has kept sacreligious hands from disturbing his dust, and Chatterton, Coleridge, and Gay provided instructions for their own tombstones. Possibly they were actuated by a not unreasonable mistrust of epitaph writers of the day.

Beazley, the architect and poet, who wrote his own epitaph, years before it was wanted, made a couple of lines sufficient—

Here lies Sam Beazley,
Who liv'd hard and died easily.

Brief as this is, of the three assertions made in it, two only were true, for Beazley suffered dreadfully in his last illness, so much so, indeed, that writing to a friend, he adopted so melancholy a strain that his correspondent wrote back complaining that his letter resembled the last chapter of Jeremiah.

"You mistake," anwsered the dying man, "it is the last chapter of Samuel."

Job Orton, son of the inventor of Stilton cheese, an innkeeper at Kidderminster, had inscribed upon his tomb—

"Job Orton, a man from Leicesterhsire,
When he dies, let him be buried here."

He was a queer character altogether, and while his wife yet lived to plague him, he wrote her epitaph—

"Here lies Esther Orton, a bitter sour weed;
God never lov'd her, nor increas'd her seed."

And, in order that he might have the advantage of her at the last day, he desired to be buried upright in a coffin that had served him for many years as a wine bin. Having a presentiment that his death was not far off, he called upon the undertaker of the town, whom he persuaded to take a walk in the churchyard with him, and when there pointed out to him the exact spot where he wished to be deposited. Having made his mind up easy, free from care, he returned home, had an old

oak chest, which he had long reserved for his coffin, to be cleaned, and then retired to bed; a few days after he was a dead man.

Ned Dawson, of Nottingham, who was found drowned in 1828, used his coffin as a cupboard. Being a staunch Tory he had it painted blue, and when his birthday came round he was wont to stretch himself at full length in it, in order to be certain he had not outgrown its dimenisons. This ceremony performed, the coffin was filled with substantial viands, hoisted upon the shoulders of some of his cronies, and carried through the town, Ned following it as chief mourner, bearing in his arms a jolly pitcher of good ale.

In the churchyard of a village in Gloucestershire appears the following, date 1786:—

"Here lies the body of Mrs. Dorothy Birch,
A distinguished friend to State and Church;
Her situation in life was such
That she might have married a lord, or a judge;
But to show her great humility,
She preferred a doctor of divinity.
For which heroic action she
Has gone aloft, a blessed angel for to be.
And now, alas! my grief it is so sore,
That I can write but two lines more,
T' advise M.D.'s for every dear woman's sake
Never to clap a blister on a lying-in woman's back."

## Epitah to the Memory of Mynheer Van Klaes, an Inveterate Smoker.

Peace to the ashes of Mynheer Van Klaes,
Who smok'd four tons of 'bacca in his days,
Who swallow'd half a million quarts of beer,
And look'd quite jolly in his 80th year.
Till death, at last, the brave old Dutchman snatches,
And coffins him with pipes, cigars, and matches.
Two articles of faith composed his creed—
Beer was his idol, and his god the weed.
The poor old man, before he went away,
Took a long pull from his old pipe of clay;
And laying back his head, so white and hoary,
Ascended to the very gates of glory.
But when St. Peter asked for his diploma,
He offered 'bacca of approved aroma.
On being told no smoking was allowed—
No place within to blow a quiet cloud.
Then, thanking the Apostle quite polite,
He'd smoke outside, if he could find a light.
Not here, but lower down they keep a fire,
And far more Lucifers than he'd require.
Well, if no smoking, any chance for beer?
No, nothing but water without spirits here.

But to return to our subject. Although it would be absurd to imagine that the fear of *death* will ever be eradicated from the human breast, yet it may be much diminished and mitigated by frequent reference to and an earnest study of the opinions, observations, and deductions of many distinguished professors of physiology, and which will be found carefully reported in the present volume.

We shall now conclude this, our last Essay, by quoting the words of Dr. Young, words as apposite as they are eloquent and impressive:—

"The spade, the shroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep, damp vault, the darkness, and the worm;
These are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead.
Imagination's fool, and error's wretch,
Man makes a death which nature never made,
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
*And feels a thousand deaths in fearing one.*"

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT.

"The senses," says Aristotle, "by which we observe and experimentize, are the foundation of all our intelligence—*no senses*, no souls."

The universe is eternal in its present nature; matter cannot be separated from its forms and real existence. He who fears death, either fears that he shall be deprived of all sense, or that he shall have different sensations. Now, in the extinction of all sensation, there can be no such thing as subjection to pain or deprivation.

Cicero says the world is nature, and besides the world there is nothing—there are no supernaturals. "The true principle," says the same philosopher, "has been the attributing Divinity to nature, and this has supplied poets with fables and filled the world with all kinds of delusions."

Spread over the world, superstition imposes its yoke upon the mind of almost every man, and domineers over the weakness of mankind. Oh, that it were extirpated even to its most latent roots! What greater service could be rendered to the world?

Poverty regulated by the law of nature is opulence.

"He," says Jean Jacques Rosseau, "who pretends that he can face death fearlessly,--lies. Every man fears to die. It is the great law imposed upon all animated beings, without which everything mortal would soon be destroyed. This fear is a

mere movement of nature, not only indifferent, but good in itself, and comformable to the order of things."

No awful name should impose upon our imagination, but we should rid ourselves of every species of superstition. It haunts and molests us, retreat where we may, it still besets and annoys us.